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ABSTRACT

As a foundation for the future plans of the Leominster (Massachusetts) Public Library, a study was undertaken to: (1) analyze the physical, economic, and demographic characteristics of the community and their implication for library service; (2) evaluate present library services and identify unfilled needs; and (3) identify goals and objectives to meet those needs. The community analysis was derived from written records, and the library analysis was compiled from reports and from a random survey of library services. This report presents the data gathered and makes recommendations for future policy. (EMH)

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE COMMUNITY AND
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF
LEOMINSTER, MASSACHUSETTS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

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A labor of love by
Jim Fish
April, 1976

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Foreward	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Chapter I. Introduction	1
Purpose and Scope	1
Methodology	1
Chapter II. Recommendations	3
Chapter III. The Community	
A. Physical Characteristics	8
B. Origin	8
C. Transportation	8
D. Communications Media	9
E. Organizations	11
F. Religious Agencies	12
G. Economy	12
H. Schools	14
I. Recreation	16
J. Population Characteristic	17
a. Age	18
b. Educational Attainment	19
c. Family Income	19
d. Labor Force Status	20
e. Major Occupations	21
f. Major Industries	22
g. Racial Composition	22
h. Family Structure	22
i. Foreign Stock	22
j. Mother Tongue	23
k. School Enrollment	24
l. Veteran Status	24
m. Mobility of the population	24
n. Miscellaneous	25
o. Summary	25
K. Census Tract Profiles	26
L. Population Growth	37
Chapter IV. Library Resources	41
Introduction	41
a. Origin and Development	41
b. Organization and Administration	42
c. Personnell	44
d. Financial Support	49
e. Facilities	52
f. Relationship with other libraries	56
g. Collections	58
Chapter V. Library Services	64
A. Library Service Hours	64
B. Registration	66
C. Circulation	69
D. Information Services	79
E. Services to Groups	80
F. Miscellaneous Other Services	80
G. Summary	81

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
1. Ten largest employers	14
2. Leominster Public Schools	14
3. Public School enrollments by grade	16
4. Population growth	17
5. Age composition	18
6. Educational attainment	19
7. Distribution of family income	19
8. Family income comparison	20
9. Labor force status - both sexes	20
10. Labor force status - by sex	20
11. Class of worker	21
12. Occupations of employed persons	21
13. Industry of the employed	22
14. Ten most prolific Contributors to Foreign Stock Pop.	23
15. Mother tongue of the population	23
16. School enrollment	24
17. Veteran status of civilian males	24
18. Population mobility	25
19. Autos available for the city	25
20. Census Tract population	26
21. Age composition by census tract	29
22. Median family income by census tract	30
23. Occupation by census tract	31
24. Major industries of the employed by census tract	32
25. Family structure by census tract	33
26. Marital status by census tract	34
27. Educational attainment by census tract	35
28. Population projections	37
29. Housing construction	38
30. Study communities by population	44
31. Study communities by staff size	45
32. Study communities by most persons served per staff mem.	45
33. Survey salaries compared with Leominster's	46
34. Salary % of expenditures 1965-1975	49
35. Budget by program	50
36. Library spending	50
37. Book expenditures	50
38. Accessions and withdrawals	58
39. 1974-1975 Collection size comparison	59
40. 1974-1975 Volumes per capita comparison	59
41. Shelflist sample by imprint date	60
42. Book use and accountability from shelflist sample	61
43. Age distribution of registration sample	66
44. Registration distribution by sex within age group	67
45. Population vs. registrant distribution by census tract	67
46. Age distribution of user sample	64
47. User distribution by sex within age group	69
48. Pop., registration, and use distribution by census tr.	70
49. Circulation sample by category	71
50. Age distribution of children's user sample	72
51. Children's user distrib. by sex within age groups	72
52. Population vs. children's use by census tract	73
53. Children's circulation by type	74

LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
1. Leominster's General Location	7
2. Traffic flow map	10
3. Location of religious agencies	13
4. Public school locations	15
5. Census tract map	27
6. Building activity in Leominster, 1960-1972	39
7. Organization chart	47
8. Library hours	64
9. Children's circulation by month, average	75
10. Adult circulation by month, average	76
11. Total circulation by month, average	77
12. Total circulation, 1966-1975	78



JOHN B. McLAUGHLIN
MAYOR

City of Leominster
Massachusetts 01453
Office of the Mayor

April 30, 1976

Mr. James H. Fish, Director
Leominster Public Library
30 West Street
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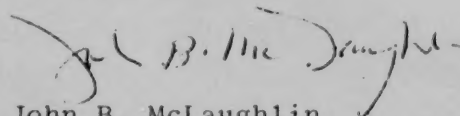
Dear Jim:

I am very pleased that you have asked me to write a foreword for your library study. I know that you have worked very hard in its preparation and feel confident that it will serve not only as a guideline for future library planning and activities but contains information that will be of value to many city departments and agencies.

I think that the Board of Library Trustees, the dedicated library staff, and you can be proud of the job you have done in providing good library service to Leominster. The people of our community are most appreciative of the many library endeavors made on their behalf, and of the above-the-call-of-duty efforts put forth by the library.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,


John B. McLaughlin
Mayor

JBMCL/bd

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This self-study comes as a result of the training and impetus gained by attending an "Institute on Developing Dynamic Public Library Services Responsive to Community Needs", sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education and the Syracuse University School of Information Studies in September, 1975. I am extremely grateful to both these agencies for creating this wonderful educational opportunity. I am especially indebted to Dan O'Connor of Rutgers and Ruth Patrick and Karen Lally of Syracuse for their organizational and tutorial efforts in putting this experience all together.

Locally, I am very appreciative of all the cooperation I have received from city offices, especially the Planning Department, and the many community agencies, especially the Chamber of Commerce, for their aid in data collection. I also wish to express my thanks to the staff of the Leominster Public Library without whose cooperation, aid, and patience I not only would not have been able to do this study but would not be able to function in general.

A great debt is owed to my fellow institute participants whose knowledge and spirit made this experience a truly unique and rewarding one. I especially would like to thank Charles Moore of the Auburn (Mass.) Public Library and Mark Nesse, Fran Fenta, and Barbara Nelson of the Beverly (Mass.) Public Library whose kind words, enthusiasm, and harassment provided great encouragement in starting and completing this study.

Most importantly, I would like to express my appreciation to Roger Greer of Syracuse, who not only initiated and led this training project but who provided me with the opportunity to participate in one of the most satisfying and productive experiences of my life.

James H. Fish
Director,
Leominster Public Library

Chapter I. Introduction

The city of Leominster, Massachusetts, is a rather unique industrialized community. It has great diversification of its population in terms of education, family income, ethnic backgrounds, and interests. It is a city with a past but, more importantly, one with a future.

A public library is also unique. There is no other agency that is geared to meet the vast range of interests and needs represented in a community. Because of the diversities in the community it serves, the task of the Leominster Public Library is especially difficult. The library is in a state of flux at present. It has begun its transition from a "bookbarn" into a more meaningful public service instrument. It is in need of mapping its future to ensure efficient development.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this study is to help prepare that map by doing three things: 1. analyzing the community in some depth to determine the many facets of its existence - physical, economic, demographic, and social - and their possible implications for library services; 2. evaluating present library resources and services to determine, in general, in what areas the library is meeting the needs of the community and in what areas improvement should be considered; and, 3. to lay the foundation for the development of short-and long-range goals and objectives that should be set to ensure that the library is meeting those community needs.

It is also hoped that this study will be of value to any library planning or evaluating that might be done at a later date.

Methodology

Different methodologies were employed for the data collection, depending on the nature of the required information. The community analysis, including population characteristics and development projections, was derived primarily from written sources which included 1970 census data and various reports or studies done by or for other governmental agencies. The census data, in particular, was analyzed and arranged in such a manner as to be the most valuable for the purposes of the study.

The library analysis and evaluation was derived from a combination of comparisons with library standards, data gathering from various library studies and regular reports, and random sampling techniques for specific areas of the library's services. Samples of the book holdings, registration file, and circulation for both adults and children were taken. It should be emphasized that these use samples represented only one loan period, chosen arbitrarily in keeping with the time frame of the study. Therefore, the information these samples generated may in no way be literally generalized for the year. However, these data are indicative of trends which are important to the context of this study.

Chapter II. Recommendations

In the following chapters of this study, data on the community of Leominster and its library will be presented and analyzed. Selected demographic, commercial, and social characteristics of the community, characteristics that traditionally bear on library use, will be studied. With regard to the library, analysis will focus on the organization, resources, services, and users and on the collections and services of the library to assess its adequacy in accordance with accepted standards and its appropriateness in terms of community needs. The findings of that research, discussed at length in the report, will be summarized very briefly here.

General Conclusions

The city of Leominster has a growing and diversified population. It is primarily a "blue collar" community with a relatively low (48.5%) portion of its population 25 years and older being high school graduates in the 1970 census. However, the work force is primarily skilled labor.

The library reflects a level of user growth that is somewhat surprising for this type of community. A high level of borrower registration (37.3%) and a drastically increasing circulation rate in recent years display great community interest in the library.

The facility has several minor problems but, in general, is active, attractive, and basically adequate for immediate needs.

Financial support is, at best, adequate in many areas. The greatest needs for additional funding rest in critical personnel needs and the development of more extensive audio-visual services.

The collections are, in general, adequate. Audio-visual materials and periodicals need additional attention, but the book collection is shaping up very well and will probably, with continued adequate funding, reach a degree of excellence within the next ten years.

Recommendations

1. THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES WITH INPUT FROM THE DIRECTOR, STAFF, AND, POSSIBLY, THE PUBLIC SHOULD DEVELOP A STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES WHICH WILL BE REVISED PERIODICALLY AS THE LIBRARY AND ITS COMMUNITY DEVELOP AND CHANGE.

This recommendation appears first because it is, ultimately, the most important. The Board must commit itself to a philosophy of library service that would indicate a posture of active community involvement, taking advantage of the library's uniqueness, or that of passive "bookbarn" services, focusing almost exclusively on the circulation of materials, rather than on programs and services.

Being a "bookbarn" will fulfill only part of the community library needs, and many of the other recommendations stated below assume a commitment to an active service philosophy and will help translate that into action.

Once again, it cannot be overemphasized that an initial establishment of goals and objectives and their subsequent periodic review perhaps each year in advance of budget preparation is extremely vital to smooth evolution and continuous progress of the Leominster Public Library as a public service institution.

2. THE LIBRARY SHOULD DEVELOP A PLAN FOR THE ACQUIRING OF ADDITIONAL STAFF POSITIONS, BASED ON INCREASED USER DEMANDS AND THE LIBRARY'S OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS, AT LEAST ONE POSITION BEING THAT OF A PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIAN.

Adequate staffing is, of course, essential for providing service. At present, the library is providing good services but has reached a point where they might have to be reduced qualitatively or quantitatively. Especially considering the agency's recent development, increasing user demands, and the considerable potential for serving an even greater number of the community, this should not be allowed to happen.

3. THE LIBRARY SHOULD EXPAND ITS FUNCTION AS AN INFORMATION CENTER.

Present information services are substantial, but to meet community needs, the scope and staffing of these services should be broadened to the point where the public may call or visit the library and receive information on virtually any subject. In addition to the library's

traditional reference function, this would include the library's collection and dissemination of information on city services, organizations, educational opportunities, and general referral service to appropriate community agencies.

4. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE POPULATION SHOULD BE EXPANDED AS STAFFING ALLOWS, AND MORE STAFFING SHOULD BE OBTAINED TO FULFILL THIS VITAL FUNCTION.

Children's services are exceptionally good but other areas are often neglected or attended to only haphazardly because of personnel restrictions. The library must develop additional services and programs to meet needs of young adults, ethnic groups, veterans, small businessmen, and apartment dwellers for example. These are all significant portions of the community but, at present, receive little in direct services from the library.

5. THE LIBRARY'S MATERIALS COLLECTIONS NEED GROWTH WITH NON-BOOK MATERIALS, SUCH AS AUDIO-VISUAL AND PERIODICALS, IN CRITICAL NEED OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING, AND THE BOOK COLLECTION DEVELOPING WELL WITH ADEQUATE FUNDING TO A MINIMUM SIZE OF 108,000 VOLUMES BY THE YEAR 2000.

Collection maintenance through careful section and systematic weeding of obsolete or unused materials is good and should continue, with the end result (assuming adequate funding) being an excellent book collection within ten years. Non-book materials, however, have not been funded as adequately and face serious demand problems that should be corrected as soon as possible.

6. THE LIBRARY SHOULD CONTINUE AND EXPAND CONTACT WITH LOCAL SCHOOL LIBRARIES, STUDY DEMANDS ON THE PUBLIC LIBRARY PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF PRESENT SCHOOL LIBRARY INADEQUACIES, AND WORK CLOSELY WITH THE SCHOOLS TO ENSURE THE MOST EFFICIENT DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF RESOURCES AND SERVICES.

A strong relationship between public and school libraries is very necessary to ensure the best possible library service to the community. Any efficient cooperative effort toward that end should be pursued.

7. THE LIBRARY SHOULD BE OPEN SUNDAY AFTERNOONS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY.

Sunday openings have proven to be very effective in many libraries, often producing the period of most heavy public use, because it provides the public an opportunity to use the library at a usually more convenient time. It is important to emphasize, however, that Sunday openings should be funded separately so as not to create even further demands on already heavily-burdened personnel scheduling.

8. A "FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY" ORGANIZATION SHOULD BE CREATED.

The value of such an organization would focus on financial support for the implementation, continuation, or expansion of library services, programs, facilities, collections, or equipment; aid in generating volunteer help for specific functions and programs, especially in the light of inadequate staffing; and additional political support for helping the library's continued growth.

In conclusion, Leominster is a community with need of and interest in substantial library resources and services, and the Leominster Public Library is an agency that is meeting only part of those demands. The library now stands at a philosophical crossroad: it can remain primarily a "bookbarn" or it can begin taking the necessary steps toward becoming the unique and vital community agency it should be. It would appear to have developed greatly in the last few years but still has a long way to go.

Chapter III. The Community

A. Physical Characteristics

The city of Leominster (see figure 1) is located in north central Massachusetts, bordered by Fitchburg and Lunenburg on the north, Lancaster on the east, Sterling and Princeton on the south, and Westminster on the west. It is 42 miles west of Boston and 20 miles north of Worcester, the two largest communities in the state. Leominster, with a 1970 population of 32,939 is the third largest city in Worcester County behind Worcester and Fitchburg.

The terrain is that of rolling hills with twelve distinct hills lining the city's horizon. Elevations range from approximately 300 feet above sea level in the east to over 1,000 feet in the west. The city's 28.81 square miles possess soils that are mostly moist and some sandy loam along the southeast.

B. Origin

In 1701 ninety men from nearby Lancaster pooled their money and purchased most of what is now Leominster from the Nashua Indians. The territory was incorporated as the town of Leominster in 1740. The first representative to the Massachusetts legislature was sent in 1774, the same year that John Chapman, better known as "Johnny Appleseed" was born in the town.

About 1770 the comb industry, which would prove to be so important to the community, had rather modest beginnings in the home of one resident with horn as the material used. By 1845, there were twenty-four factories engaged in comb production, and later viscoloid was developed as a horn substitute by E.I. duPont DeNemours. Leominster thus became known as "the Comb City".

C. Transportation

The highway system that dissects the city has proven very valuable to its industrial development. The most significant highway at this time is Route 2 which runs east from Boston to the western portion of the state and across the New York state border. The only other east/west

link across the state is the Massachusetts Turnpike in the southern section of the state. Route 2 also provides relatively easy access to Interstate 495 and Route 128, the beltways around the metropolitan Boston area.

Also important are Routes 12 and 13 which connect the city with New Hampshire in the north and Worcester and other points south, as well as Route 117 which provides another access to Interstate 495.

Of great future significance is the construction of Interstate 190, which has just recently begun in the eastern section of the city. This highway will eventually connect the major arteries of Route 2 and the Massachusetts Turnpike, providing easy and quick access to not only Boston and Worcester but to the other major highway arteries of New England as well. It will also ease much of the congestion in downtown since Route 12 is also Main Street and the present principal connector with Worcester (see traffic flow map, figure 2).¹

This highway will have great impact on the future of Leominster by stimulating economic growth because of its strategic location, added accessibility, and available land and by easing traffic downtown, thereby promoting a rejuvenation of that business area.²

Public transportation in the city is provided primarily by bus lines. There are several bus companies that provide charter or regular passenger service to Worcester, Boston, and connections with any part of the state or country. Locally, the Fitchburg and Leominster Street Railway provides bus service between the two communities and allows easy access to the center of Leominster by the residents of its northern sections.

Also worthy of mention are the over thirty-five established trucking firms in the city which provide service both locally and for long distances and the Fitchburg Municipal Airport located in Leominster and providing small plane rental and charter services.

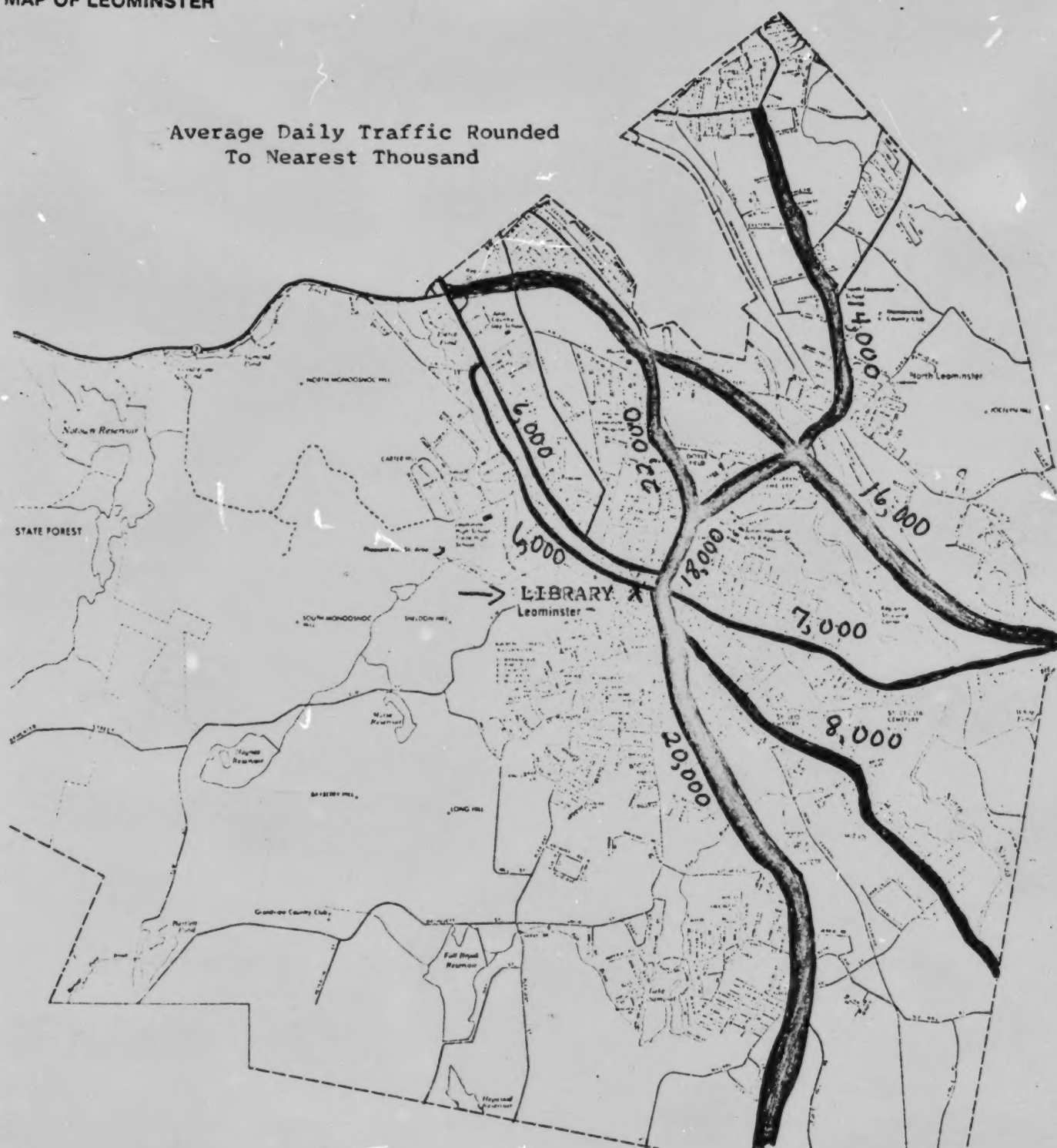
D. Communications Media

Leominster is in a position to be served directly and indirectly by a variety of media. Local media include "The Fitchburg Sentinel and Leominster Daily Enterprise", "The Evening Gazette", and "Worcester Telegram", daily papers; the "Leominster Tribune" and "The Leominster Re-

Figure 2. Traffic Flow Map

MAP OF LEOMINSTER

Average Daily Traffic Rounded
To Nearest Thousand



view", weekly papers; WLMS, WFGL, WEIM, and WFMP, radio stations for the Fitchburg-Leominster area; and Montachusett Cable Television. Boston media indirectly serving the area include radio stations WBZ, WHDH, and WRKO; VHF television stations WGBH (PBS), WBZ (NBC), WCBV (ABC) and WNAC (CBS); and UHF television stations WSBK and WLVI. The Worcester area is also served by UHF station WSMW.

This cross-section of media affords the residents of Leominster access to a great variety of educational, informational, and recreational programming. They also provide an excellent network for the dissemination of library promotional materials. At present, the library generates a weekly radio program on WLMS, the Leominster station, which provides about five minutes of book talks, library news, and information on the variety of library services.

E. Organizations

A complete listing of all the civic and fraternal organizations has never been compiled, but a comparison of listings maintained by the local paper, the library, Chamber of Commerce, and the 1975 City Directory reveal several hundred different associations, clubs, or societies. Their purposes are as varied as the amount of their memberships.

This wide variety of activities can be divided into the following groups, with examples:

- Business - Chamber of Commerce, Greater Leominster Jaycee's, Leominster Business and Professional Women's Club;
- Civic and Governmental - League of Women Voters, Leominster Taxpayers Association;
- Education - Leominster Teachers Association, Parent-Teacher Organization;
- Ethnic - Alliance Francaise Order of the Sons of Italy;
- Fraternal - Fraternal Order of Elks, Loyal Order of the Moose;
- Historical - Daughters of the American Revolution, Leominster Historical Society;
- Hobby - Hobbycrafters, Leominster Art Association;
- Labor - Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, United Plastic Workers Union;
- Patriotic - American Legion, Disabled American Veterans, Franco-American Veterans, Italian-American Veterans;

Religious - Holy Family Guild, Levine Hannah Chapter of Hadassah;

Service - Lion's Club, Leominster Hospital Guild;

Sports - Leominster Sportsman's Association, North Leominster Rod and Gun Club.

The youth of the city have a variety of activities from which to choose, including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Lassie and Little Leagues, Pop Warner Football, Youth Hockey League, and 4-H.

The Leominster Public Library attempts to maintain an organizations file of some of the more active groups with officers, phone numbers, and meeting places, dates, and times.

At present, the library provides little direct service to these groups beyond access to the regional film collection and occasional use of the library's meeting room. There is, however, a great deal of potential for providing library services to these groups.

F. Religious Agencies

There are a number of religious agencies serving the spiritual needs of Leominster residents. Sixteen churches of ten denominations have been established in Leominster with the most numerous group being that of the Roman Catholic faith. Most of these agencies have active organizations affiliated with them. The Jewish synagogue also has a very active congregation. Locations of these agencies can be seen in figure 3. They provide a full-range of activities for their constituencies, including youth groups and many recreational and social as well as spiritual functions.

G. Economy

The backbone of Leominster's economy is in manufacturing where 48.6% of the 1970 working population were engaged. This compares to only 27.6% for Massachusetts as a whole.

This manufacturing strength, especially in the plastics industry, is born out by the following list of the ten largest non-municipal employers in 1975 and their products:

Figure 3. Location of Religious Agencies

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MAP OF LEOMINSTER



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Table 1. Ten Largest Employers

<u>Company</u>	<u>No. of Employees</u>	<u>Products</u>
1. Foster Grant	1550	Plastic products
2. Leominster Hospital	500	Medical services
3. Borden Chemical	341	Industrial chemicals
4. Union Products	225	Plastic flower pots, etc.
5. DuPont	209	Combs, toothbrushes, etc.
6. Bay State Products	200	Plastic products
7. G.S. Carrington	200	Cards, giftwrap, etc.
8. Charlton Company	185	Living room furniture
9. Rand Whitney	175	Paper boxes
10. Tucker Manufacturing	159	Plastic housewares

While the economic picture for the city does not look bright at this time, Leominster's economic history is a strong one, and many factors, including the construction of I-190, available land for industrial or commercial development both in any of the three more developed industrial parks or in other areas, and a pool of skilled labor, lend themselves to some relative strength and growth potential.

H. Schools

The schools of Leominster are suffering from a distinct case of overcrowding. The total enrollment as of October, 1975 was 7,176, compared to 6,750 in 1970. The school, date of construction, and enrollment figures are shown below and their respective locations shown on figure 4.

Table 2. Leominster Public Schools

<u>School Name</u>	<u>Construction Date</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Johnny Appleseed	1959	402
Bennett	1874	211
Carter Jr. High	1904	296
Fall Brook	1967	994
Gallagher Jr. High	1927	704
George	1896	198
Lancaster	1901	293
Leominster High	1963	1,938
Leominster Trade High	1963	347
Northwest	1956	340
Pierce	1888	194
Priest	1894	227
Southeast	1972	810
Total Enrollment		7,176

All of the preceding not indicated otherwise are elementary schools with the Carter Junior High housing four sixth grade classes. The city is also served by four elementary parochial schools (Julie Country Day, St. Ann's, St. Cecilia's, and St. Leo's) with a combined enrollment of 1,090.

The enrollments by grade in the public schools are listed below:

Table 3. Public School Enrollments By Grade

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Kindergarten	509
Special	17
I	530
II	486
III	532
IV	552
V	565
VI	561
VII	549
VIII	546
IX	585
X	535
XI	564
XII	556
Post Graduate	<u>31</u>
Total	7,176

The primary problems of the schools rest in the age of many of the buildings and in general overcrowding, which has forced the High School to adopt a double sessions schedule for the past two years. A building program would, of course, provide solutions and is presently being explored, discussed, and debated.

I. Recreation

Many recreational activities are available to Leominster residents. The city contains three golf courses, one skiing area, a bowling alley, four movie theatres, several picnic areas, an amusement park, a YMCA, and many organized league facilities (Little League, etc.).

In addition, the city's very active recreation program, which became full-blown four years ago, maintains

twelve playgrounds, eight tennis courts, fourteen baseball or softball diamonds, two summer swimming areas, and one full-scale athletic field. Through the cooperation of the School Department, the Recreation Department has also been able to utilize school facilities for a variety of indoor and outdoor programs and activities.

Leominster residents, especially with their relative proximity to Worcester, Boston, and other areas, have a variety of recreational facilities and activities with which to use their leisure time.

J. Population Characteristics

Before beginning an analysis of Leominster's population, it would be appropriate to profile some of the characteristics of library users. Many studies have been done to profile library users and non-users. Interestingly enough, that profile has not changes appreciably since Berelson's The Library Public of 1949.³

From this study and others such as those by Bundy⁴ and Evans⁵ that have reaffirmed his findings, it is possible to state that people who use libraries are likely to follow these general patterns:

- 1) more young people than elderly;
- 2) more highly educated than less educated;
- 3) more high income than low income;
- 4) more professional than clerical workers;
- 5) more housewives;
- 6) more who live in close proximity to the library.

To determine the applicability of these findings an indepth analysis of census data is necessary. The city's official population in 1970 is listed as 32,939. This is a 17.9% increase over the 1960 total of 27,929.

Population growth for the past 25 years is listed below:

Table 4. Population Growth

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Density per sq. mile</u>
1950	24,075	836
1955	24,787	860
1960	27,929	969
1965	29,729	1,032
1970	32,939	1,143
1975	35,331	1,227

The 1975 figure is based upon the city's street list, the most accurate figure at this time.⁶ Estimates generated in the early 1970's were for a 1975 population of 37,000 - 38,000. These estimates have not been met for a variety of reasons, including a state ban on construction in the city stemming from the restrictions of the municipal sewer system and a general slump in the area economy, which saw an increase in the unemployment rate from 3.5% in 1970 to 18.3% in August, 1975.

Despite a 7.3% increase in population since the 1970 census was taken, much of the information generated by that study is still valid and reveals a great deal about varying aspects of the community. The following statistical dissection of the city is based on the figures generated by the 1970 census. It covers these areas of concern:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| a. Age | i. Foreign Stock |
| b. Educational Attainment | j. Mother Tongue |
| c. Family Income | k. School Enrollment |
| d. Labor Force Status | l. Veteran Status |
| e. Major Occupations | m. Mobility of Population |
| f. Major Industries | n. Miscellaneous |
| g. Racial Composition | o. Summary |
| h. Family Structure | |

a. Age. The 1970 population of Leominster can be broken down into the following age categories:

Table 5. Age Composition

<u>Age</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Under 5	3,003	9.1
5 - 13	6,078	18.5
14 - 18	3,137	9.5
19 - 34	6,899	20.9
35 - 64	10,684	32.4
65 & older	<u>3,138</u>	<u>9.6</u>
	32,939	100.0

37.1% of the population was 18 years old or younger. The percentage of under 5 years old was 9.1, compared to 8.3% for the state. Leominster's 65 or over percentage of 9.6 was slightly lower than the state's 11.2%. Both of these comparisons helped generate a city median age of 28.3 as compared to 29.0 for the state and 29.6 for Worcester County. The city's median age decreased from 30.1 in 1960.

b. Educational Attainment. Of the population 25 years old and over, 31.1% had an elementary school education or less, 48.5% were high school graduates, including 16.3% who had completed some years of college, and 7.9% that were college graduates.

Table 6. Educational Attainment

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Persons 25 years and over	17,694	100.0
No. school yrs. complete	165	0.9
Elementary: 1 to 7 yrs.	2,881	16.3
3 years	2,460	13.9
High School: 1 to 3 years	3,609	20.4
4 years	5,698	32.2
College: 1 to 3 years	1,483	8.4
4 years	1,398	7.9
Median school years completed	11.8	----

Leominster's percentage of high school graduates was substantially less than that of the state (48.5% vs. 58.4%) as was the median number of years complete (11.8 vs. 12.2). These figures were also less than those for Worcester County as a whole (52.7% and 12.1 respectively). However, these numbers have increased significantly for Leominster since 1960 when only 38.8% of its "over 25" population finished high school and the median for years completed was 10.3. Interestingly enough, Leominster's percentage of college graduates was 7.9% as compared to the state's 6.8%.

In general, the population of Leominster 25 years and over was not well-educated. There were, however, significant variations within the city which will be discussed later.

c. Family Income. The median income for the 8,379 families in 1969 was \$10,388 with a distribution that could be characterized as low middle class primarily.

Table 7. Distribution of Family Income

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
All families	8,379	100.0
Less than \$3,000	586	7.0
\$3,000 - \$4,999	509	6.1
\$5,000 - \$6,999	700	8.4
\$7,000 - \$9,999	2,154	25.7
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2,567	30.6
\$15,000 - \$24,999	1,438	17.2
\$25,000 or more	425	5.1

A comparison of Leominster family income with those of the county or the entire state revealed the former fairly consistent with the latter:

Table 8. Family Income Comparison

<u>Income</u>	<u>Leominster</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>State</u>
Less than \$5,000	13.1%	13.4%	13.7%
\$5,000 - \$7,999	16.2	17.1	15.9
\$8,000 - \$14,999	48.5	48.5	45.2
\$15,000 - \$24,999	17.2	17.1	19.6
\$25,000 or more	5.0	3.9	5.6
Median family income	\$10,388	\$10,444	\$10,835

Again, there were great differences in income levels throughout the city, and these will be discussed later.

d. Labor Force Status. The labor force in Leominster numbered 14,235 individuals (63.6% of all persons 16 years old and over). Males represented 61.1% of the labor force with females constituting 38.9%.

Table 9. Labor Force Status - Both Sexes

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total, 16 yrs. and over	22,375	100.0
Labor Force	14,235	63.6
Civilian Labor Force	14,077	62.9
Employed	13,578	60.7
Unemployed	499	2.2
Armed Forces	158	0.7
Not in Labor Force	8,140	36.4

Table 10. Labor Force Status - By Sex

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Males</u>		
Total, 16 yrs. and over	10,491	100.0%
Labor Force	8,751	83.4
Civilian Labor Force	8,598	82.0
Employed	8,320	79.3
Unemployed	278	2.6
Armed Forces	153	1.5
Not in Labor Force	1,740	16.6

(continued)

Table 10. Labor Force Status - By Sex (cont.)

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Females</u>		
Total, 16 yrs. and over	11,884	100.0%
Labor Force - Civilian	5,479	46.1
Employed	5,258	44.7
Unemployed	221	1.9
Not in Civilian Labor Force	6,405	53.9

Of the 13,578 employed persons in the city, 84.5% worked for wages or salary paid by a private company, business, or individual. Another 10.3% worked for local, state, or the federal government. Self-employed persons represented 4.8% of those employed.

Table 11. Class of Worker

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total employed	13,578	100.0%
Private wage or salary	11,479	84.5
Government worker	1,397	10.3
Federal government	379	2.8
State government	181	1.3
Local government	837	6.2
Self-employed worker	655	4.8
Unpaid family worker	47	0.3

e. Major Occupations. The most significant occupation (44.5%) for those employed was in the area of skilled work as craftsmen or operators. The remainder of the work force was spread among the other general categories fairly evenly.

Table 12. Occupations of Employed Persons

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total employed	13,578	100.0
Professional, etc.	2,735	20.1
Sales and clerical	2,841	20.4
Skilled workers	6,036	44.5
Laborers, services, etc.	1,966	14.5

The most significant aspect of these figures was the very high percentage of skilled workers (44.5% compared to 30.4% for the state) who were both a cause and effect of

the industrial growth of the city. Approximately 61% of all employed persons residing in the city worked within the city.

f. Major Industries. The strongest industrial category was manufacturing by a wide margin, followed in order by wholesale and retail trade, and professional and related services.

Table 13. Industry of the Employed

	<u>Number</u>	<u>City %</u>	<u>State %</u>
Manufacturing	6,603	48.6	27.6
Wholesale and Retail trade	2,439	18.0	19.0
Professional and Related Services	1,717	12.6	19.4

g. Racial Composition. There were 32,823 white persons living in the city or 99.6% of the total population. Blacks living in the city in 1970 totalled 87.

h. Family Structure. There were 8,336 families in the 1970 census. Of these, 91% were headed by a man with 9% headed by a woman.

The average size of families in the city was 3.64 persons as compared with an average of 3.15 for Worcester County and 3.42 for the state of Massachusetts.

4,886 or 58.3% of these families had children (under 18) living with them. The total number of children was 11,227 or 34.1% of the total population. The average number of children per family was 1.34.

i. Foreign Stock. 12,551 of the people of Leominster in 1970 were of foreign stock, i.e. they themselves were foreign born or were children of foreign born parents. This total accounted for 38.1% of the population, compared to 33.3% for the state as a whole, and should have implications for the planning of library programs and services.

Table 14. Ten Most Prolific Contributors
to the Foreign Stock Population

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Canada	6,359	50.7
Finland	216	1.7
Germany	369	2.9
Greece	195	1.6
Ireland	622	5.0
Italy	2,540	20.2
Poland	157	1.3
Sweden	104	0.8
USSR	141	1.1
United Kingdom	586	4.7

Canada and Italy alone account for 70.9% or 8,899 of the foreign stock population.

j. Mother Tongue. 37.0% of the population reported that a language other than English was spoken in their homes when they were children. This compared to a 21.1% total for the state and, being such a high percentage, should have an impact on library planning for services and/or programs.

Of 11,800 persons designated as other than English, 7,281 or 61.7% cited French and 2,377 or 20.1% spoke Italian. This correlated with the foreign stock findings with a preponderance of French Canadians and Italians immigrating into the city.

Table 15. Mother Tongue of the Population

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total Population	32,939	100.0
English only	20,059	60.9
French	7,281	22.1
German	387	1.2
Hungarian	11	0.0
Italian	2,377	7.2
Polish	154	0.5
Russian	16	0.0
Spanish	499	1.5
Swedish	33	0.1
Yiddish	148	0.4
All Other	894	2.7
Not Reported	1,080	3.3

k. School Enrollment. There were 9,464 persons 3 to 34 years old enrolled in schools that lived in the city. This includes 733 children in nursery school or kindergarten, 5,763 children in grades 1 through 8, and 2,284 in high school. The 684 persons enrolled in college include only those students who live in the city while attending school.

Table 16. School Enrollment

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Total Enrolled (3-34 yrs)	9,464	100.0
Nursery & Kindergarten	733	7.7
Elementary, 1-8 yrs.	5,763	60.9
High School, 1-4 yrs.	2,284	24.1
College	684	7.2

l. Veteran Status. Of the 9,772 civilian males 18 years of age and over in the city, 4,835 or 49.7% were veterans. The table below presents the number of veterans, classified by periods of service. Veterans with more than one period of service were classified in the most recent.

Table 17. Veteran Status of Civilian Males

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Civilian Males, 18 yrs. and over	9,722	100.0
Veterans -	4,835	49.7
Vietnam conflict	643	6.6
Korean War	976	10.0
World War II	2,237	23.0
World War I	222	2.3
Other Service	757	7.8
Non-Veterans	4,887	50.3

m. Mobility of the Population. About 38.7% of the 29,969 persons 5 years and over in the city moved between 1965 and 1970. Of these movers, 61.9% moved within the same county, and 6.4% moved from a different county within the state. The remainder of the movers came from states other than Massachusetts. Of the 1,380 persons who moved to Leominster during the past five years from other states, 46.1% came from the northeastern states, 19.6% from the north central, 15.9% from southern, and 18.4% from western states.

Table 18. Population Mobility

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Persons 5 yrs. and over	29,969	100.0
Same house as 1970	18,371	61.3
Different house in the U.S.	9,302	31.0
Same county	7,182	24.0
Different county	2,120	7.1
Same state	740	2.5
Different state	1,380	4.6
Northeast	636	2.1
North Central	271	0.9
South	219	0.7
West	254	0.8
Abroad, and not reported	2,296	7.7

n. Miscellaneous. A telephone was available to 9,341 or 93.2% of the 10,019 households in Leominster, and 100.7% had a television.

An automobile was available to 8,551 or 85.3% of the households. Only one automobile was available to 55.0% of the households while 30.3% had two or more.

Table 19. Autos Available for the City

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
All occupied units	10,019	100.0
1 Automobile	5,512	55.0
2 Automobiles	2,562	25.6
3 Automobiles (or more)	477	4.8
None	1,468	14.7

o. Summary of Population Characteristics. There existed in the population data a great diversity among different areas of the city. These deserve additional attention and will be discussed below.

As a whole, however, several generalizations can be made concerning Leominster. In general, the population has less education than the state as a whole both in median number of school years completed and in the percentage of high school graduates, this despite the fact that the city had a higher percentage of college graduates than the state. It should be pointed out, however, that the education level had increased substantially from the 1960 census.

Leominster also had a very high percentage (44.5%) of its workers classified as "skilled" and with almost half of those working engaged in some aspect of manufacturing (almost twice that of the state percentage) and a significantly smaller than state average figure engaged in professional and related activities. This contributed to a median family income that was below the state level with a heavy concentration in the low middle class area.

The city also had some relatively easily defined significant groups (e.g. ethnic and veterans), for which the library could consider special programs and/or services.

Age-wise, the city was slightly younger than the state, due partly to larger percentages under five years old and smaller ones 65 and over, putting added pressure for strong services to children and young adults, both immediately and in the foreseeable future.

In general, Leominster could be characterized as a blue collar manufacturing community with pockets of well-educated, relatively high income families in many areas of the city.

K. Census Tract Profiles. Because of the diversity in the people that live within the different areas of the city, a general look at the city should be supplemented by a specific analysis of data by census tract. Leominster for the 1970 census was divided into seven tracts (see figure 5), a tract being an arbitrarily determined group of numbers of persons set up by geography and some degree of homogeneity.

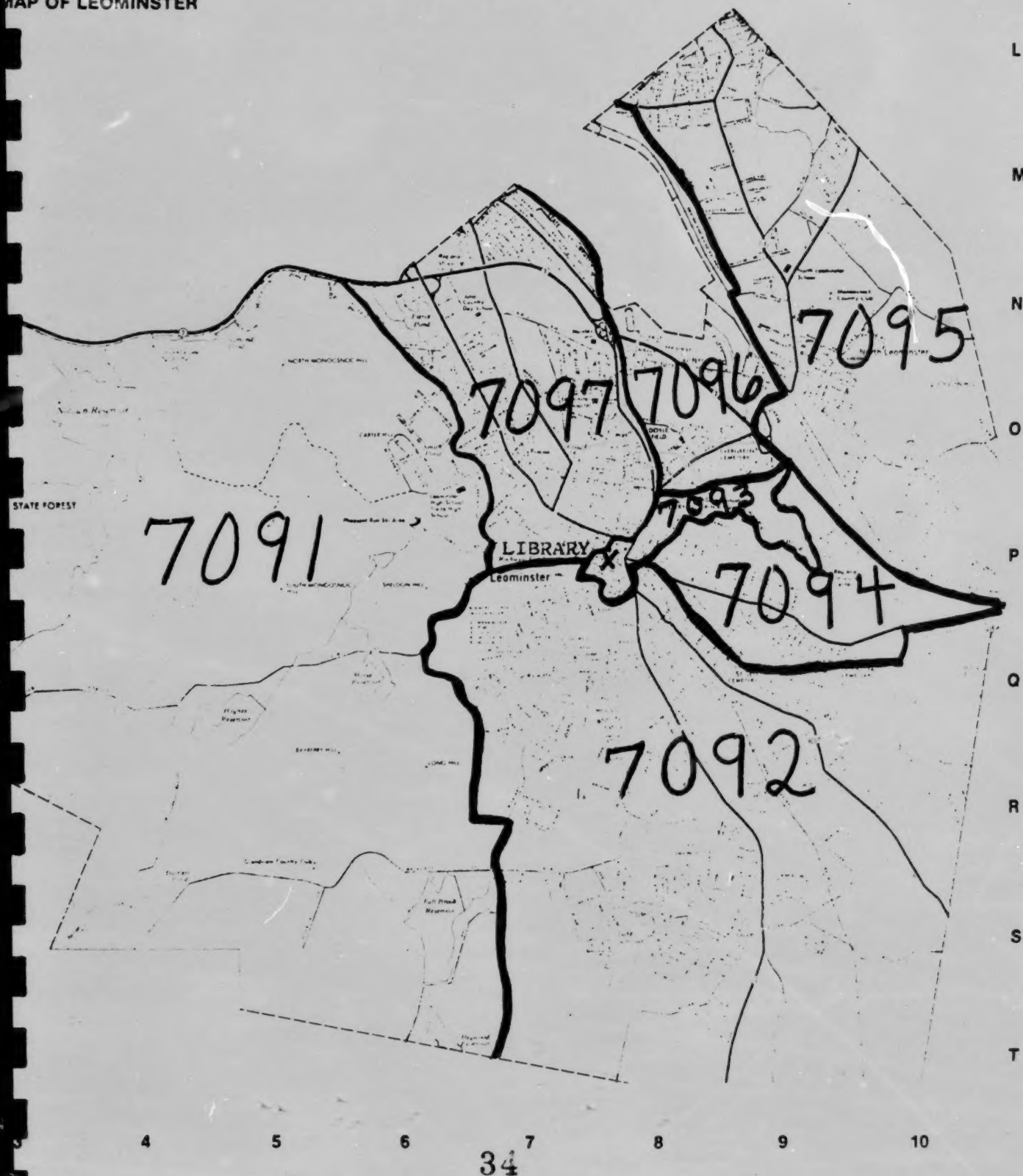
The seven tracts and their population are listed below.

Table 20. Census Tract Population

<u>Tract No.</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% of Population</u>
7091	989	3.0
7092	10,723	32.6
7093	715	2.2
7094	5,776	17.5
7095	5,045	15.3
7096	1,708	5.2
7097	<u>7,983</u>	<u>24.2</u>
TOTALS	32,939	100.0

Figure 5. Census Tract Map

MAP OF LEOMINSTER



A very substantial knowledge of the characteristics of the people of each tract can be obtained by a careful examination of the data presented in Tables 21 - 27, compiled from the 1970 census data.

A summary of the characteristics of each tract are listed below:

a. Tract 7091 with a population of 989 as represented by 208 families was located in the eastern section of the city. It had the lowest population density, and it is in this area that much of the city's future growth will take place. It had by far the highest median family annual income (\$15,455) with 0% of its families under \$5,000 and 19.6% of them more than \$25,000. This area also had the highest percentage (39.4) of its population under 18 years old and the highest number of children per family. It also had a substantially higher percentage (37.8) of its work force in the professional and managerial category.

b. Tract 7092 was the largest in population (10,723) and is located in the southern sector of the city. Its most distinguishing characteristic is that of its recent growth, especially in apartment construction in the early 1970's. The area is certainly in a state of flux but as of 1970 it was slightly below the city median in such categories as education and income. This is certainly an area that should be studied at a later date with additional statistical input.

c. Tract 7093 was the smallest both in population and area and included much of the city's downtown area. In general, this tract was characterized by less education, lower income, fewer children, and older residents. Its 9.2 median years of school completed was next to last in the city, and its 25.3% high school graduation was the lowest figure. In addition, the area had only eight college graduates (1.4% of the 25 and over population). This lack of education probably resulted in the lowest family income median (\$8,036 compared to a city wide \$10,388) in Leominster. 26.5% of the families had less than \$5,000 annual incomes and no family had \$25,000 or more. The tract's percentage (19.3) of population under 18 years old was dramatically lower than any other area as was its .95 children per family. In addition, its 21.8% of its residents which were 65 years and older was almost twice that of any other tract. The same held true for percentage of those widowed (18.2%) and those divorced (8.1% or almost three times the next highest percentage).

Table 21. Age Composition by Census Tract

Age	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Under 5 %	77 7.7%	1104 10.3%	44 6.2%	580 10.0%	443 8.8%	164 9.6%	591 7.4%	3003 9.1%
5 - 13 %	229 23.2%	2090 19.5%	65 9.1%	1032 17.9%	989 19.6%	320 18.7%	1353 16.9%	6078 18.5%
14 - 18 %	127 12.8%	942 8.8%	51 7.1%	510 8.8%	550 10.9%	156 9.1%	801 10.0%	3137 9.5%
19 - 34 %	156 15.8%	2438 22.7%	129 18.0%	1442 25.0%	874 17.3%	341 20.0%	1519 19.0%	6899 20.9%
35 - 64 %	338 24.2%	3325 31.0%	270 37.8%	1668 28.9%	1787 35.4%	543 31.8%	2753 34.5%	10,684 32.4%
65 & Over %	62 6.3%	824 7.7%	156 21.8%	544 9.4%	402 8.0%	184 10.8%	966 21.1%	3138 9.6%
TOTALS	989	10,723	715	5776	5045	1708	7983	32,939

Table 22. Median Family Income by Census Tract

Family Income	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Less than \$5,000	--	331	41	301	88	54	280	1095
%	---	11.9%	26.5%	19.5%	7.1%	13.8%	13.6%	13.1%
\$5000 - \$7999	25	519	36	302	119	71	282	1354
%	12.0%	18.7%	23.2%	19.6%	9.5%	18.1%	13.7%	16.2%
\$8000 - 14,999	76	1415	49	758	612	238	914	4062
%	36.6%	51.0%	31.6%	49.2%	49.0%	60.7%	44.4%	48.5%
\$15,000 - 24,999	66	447	29	141	294	21	440	1438
%	31.8%	16.1%	18.7%	9.1%	23.6%	5.3%	21.4%	17.2%
\$25,000 - 49,999	30	60	---	32	114	8	99	343
%	14.4%	2.2%	---	2.1%	9.1%	2.0%	4.8%	4.1%
\$50,000 +	11	5	---	8	21	---	42	87
%	5.2%	.2%	---	.5%	1.7%	---	2.0%	1.0%
Median Family Income	\$15,455	\$9,979	\$8,036	\$8,982	\$12,500	\$9,067	\$11,422	\$10,388
Total Families	208	2777	155	1452	1248	392	2057	8379

Table 23. Occupation By Census Tract

Occupation	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Professional, Technical, Man- agerial, etc. %	142 37.8%	751 16.6%	24 7.9%	237 9.9%	593 29.1%	113 16.2%	875 26.9%	2735 20.1%
Sales & Clerical %	96 25.5%	863 19.1%	36 11.8%	355 14.9%	526 25.9%	154 22.1%	811 24.9%	2841 20.9%
Skilled Workers %	84 22.3%	2259 49.9%	165 54.3%	1479 62.1%	657 32.3%	322 46.2%	1070 32.8%	6036 44.5%
Laborers, Ser- vices, etc. %	54 14.4%	654 14.4%	79 26.0%	312 13.1%	258 12.7%	108 15.5%	501 15.4%	1966 14.5%
Total employed	376	4527	304	2383	2034	697	3257	13,578

Table 24. Major Industries of the Employed by Census Tract

Industry	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Manufacturing %	135 35.9%	2345 51.8%	135 44.4%	1437 60.3%	899 44.2%	328 47.1%	1324 40.7%	6603 48.6%
Wholesale & Retail Trade %	105 27.9%	744 16.5%	52 17.1%	294 12.4%	434 21.3%	119 17.1%	691 21.3%	2439 18.0%
Professional & Related Services %	88 23.4%	511 11.3%	39 12.8%	148 6.2%	306 15.0%	96 13.2%	529 16.2%	1717 12.6%
TOTAL EMPLOYED	376	4527	304	2383	2034	697	3257	13,578

Table 25. Family Structure by Census Tract

Category	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Total pop.	984	10,723	715	5776	5045	1708	7983	32,939
Persons per household	3.88	3.36	1.96	3.12	3.51	3.41	3.09	3.64
# of families	233	2,726	145	1520	1264	407	2041	8336
# of children* %	390 29.4%	3828 35.7%	138 19.3%	1963 34.0%	1838 36.4%	562 32.9%	2508 31.4%	11,227 34.1%
Children per family overall	1.67	1.40	.95	1.29	1.45	1.38	1.23	1.34
Children per family having children	2.64	2.38	2.26	2.26	2.43	2.61	2.38	2.38

*under 18 years of age

Table 26. Marital Status by Census Tract

Status of persons 14 yrs. & older	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
Single %	196 28.7%	1755 23.3%	173 38.6%	1075 25.9%	867 24.0%	335 27.3%	1527 25.3%	5928 24.8%
Married %	440 64.5%	5123 68.0%	274 45.2%	2707 65.0%	2446 67.7%	754 61.6%	3819 63.2%	15,563 65.2%
Widowed %	37 5.4%	493 6.5%	110 18.2%	279 6.7%	262 7.3%	101 8.2%	555 9.2%	1837 7.7%
Divorced %	10 1.4%	158 2.1%	49 8.1%	103 2.5%	38 1.0%	34 2.8%	138 2.3%	530 2.2%
TOTAL - 14 yrs. & older	683	7529	606	4164	3613	1224	6039	23,858

Table 27. Educational Attainment by Census Tract

Yrs. of School Completed*	7091	7092	7093	7094	7095	7096	7097	City
None	---	70	---	20	10	11	54	165
%	---	1.2%	---	.7%	.4%	1.2%	1.2%	.9%
Elementary	42	1817	265	1396	309	325	987	5341
%	8.9%	32.2%	47.8%	48.2%	18.8%	36.1%	21.9%	30.2%
High School	274	3121	240	1343	1556	437	2336	9307
%	58.0%	55.3%	43.3%	46.3%	57.4%	48.6%	51.8%	52.6%
College	156	638	49	140	635	127	1136	2881
%	33.1%	11.3%	8.8%	4.8%	23.4%	14.1%	25.2%	16.3%
Total Population								
25 yrs. & older	472	5646	554	2899	2710	900	4513	17,694
Median School Yrs. Completed	12.6	11.2	9.2	9.1	12.3	10.6	12.3	11.8
% of High Sch. Graduates	77.5%	44.1%	25.3%	26.4%	62.3%	39.1%	61.6%	48.5%

* At least some completed in each category

Track 7093 also had the highest percentage (47.2%) of people not in the work force and showed a much higher figure (26.0%) of its population classified in the area of laborers.

All these figures lend themselves to the conclusion that many of the residents were retired and/or living on fixed incomes, often alone.

d. Tract 7094 with a population of 5,776 also centrally located to the downtown. It also was characterized by low education with the lowest (9.1) median school years completed and a very low (26.4%) high school graduates. 48.2% of the population 25 and over had for their schooling at best an elementary school education. Only 1.7% of that group were college graduates.

Median family income was low at \$8,932, with 19.5% of the families in the less-than-\$5,000 category. 60.3% of the workers were in the manufacturing category with 62.1% of the workers classified as skilled. Both these figures were substantially higher than those for other tracts. The figure for professional and related services, however, was only 6.2%, substantially lower than any other tract.

e. Tract 7095 was the area of 5,045 persons, known as "North Leominster", which had its own identity years ago but is now an area in which much developing has been done so that the historic boundaries are minimal today. This tract was similar to #7091 in that it also had indicators of better educational and income levels. The median years of school completed was 12.3 with 62.3% high school and 14.2% college graduates - all figures second only to #7091. Median family income was \$12,500 with 9.1% of the families having income of \$25,000 or more. 29.1% of the workers were classified as professional or managerial while only 12.7% (lowest in the city) were laborers. In most other respects this tract was similar to city medians.

f. Tract 7096 was an area of 1,708 persons located in the north central section of the city. Its median school years completed of 10.6 and percentage of high school graduates of 39.1% were both significantly below city-wide figures, as was its median family income of \$9,067. Beyond these differences and a city high percentage of 60.7% of its families in the \$8,000 - \$14,999 income and only 2% in the \$25,000 plus category this tract was otherwise fairly consistent with the overall city profile.

g. Tract 7097 was located in the north central area also and had the second largest population at 7,983. It ranked third in the important categories of high school graduates (61.6%), college graduates (11.9%), and family income (\$11,422) and tied for second with 12.3 median school years completed.

The diversity of its population was reflected in the fact that it had the highest number of college graduates (539) and families (42) with \$50,000 plus income while containing 32.7% of the city's population with no education and having a higher percentage than the city of its families under the \$5,000 annual income level. In addition, its relatively high figure (26.9%) of persons classified as professional or managerial was offset by an also relatively high (15.4%) figure for those engaged as laborers.

h. Summary of Tracts. It is interesting to note that three tracts (7091, 7095, and 7097) were consistently higher than the others in many categories with tendencies toward better education, higher family income, and more white collar occupations. Tracts 7093 and 7094 are characterized by lower educational and income levels and, especially 7093, displayed some unique characteristics. Tracts 7092 and 7096 were closer to being "typical" of the city than the others.

L. Population Growth. It is anticipated that despite declining birth rates, the population of the city will continue to grow.

Table 28. Population Projections

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
1975	35,331	---
1980	39,786 ¹⁰	12.6
2000	54,207 ¹¹	53.4

This growth will, of course, depend on many factors, including continued economic growth and residential land availability.

What this growth means for the city depends, to a large extent, on where it takes place and what type of housing is involved. Much of the population growth of the early 1970's caused and was caused by the construction of a large number of apartment buildings. The table below shows a comparison of apartment and single family construction in that period as reflected by building permits issued:

Table 29. Housing Construction¹²

<u>Year</u>	<u>Single Family</u>	<u>Apartments</u>
1969	90	71
1970	87	117
1971	137	1,083
1972	104	509
1973	<u>103</u>	<u>150</u>
TOTALS	521	1,930

Figure 6 reflects the relative stability of the annual construction of single family homes from 1960-1972 while the same period saw dramatic increases in apartment construction from 1970-1972¹³.

This growth is important for many reasons. First, it took place in the areas covered primarily by 1970 census tracts 7092 and 7095 and will have appropriate impact on the city, in general, and those areas in particular.

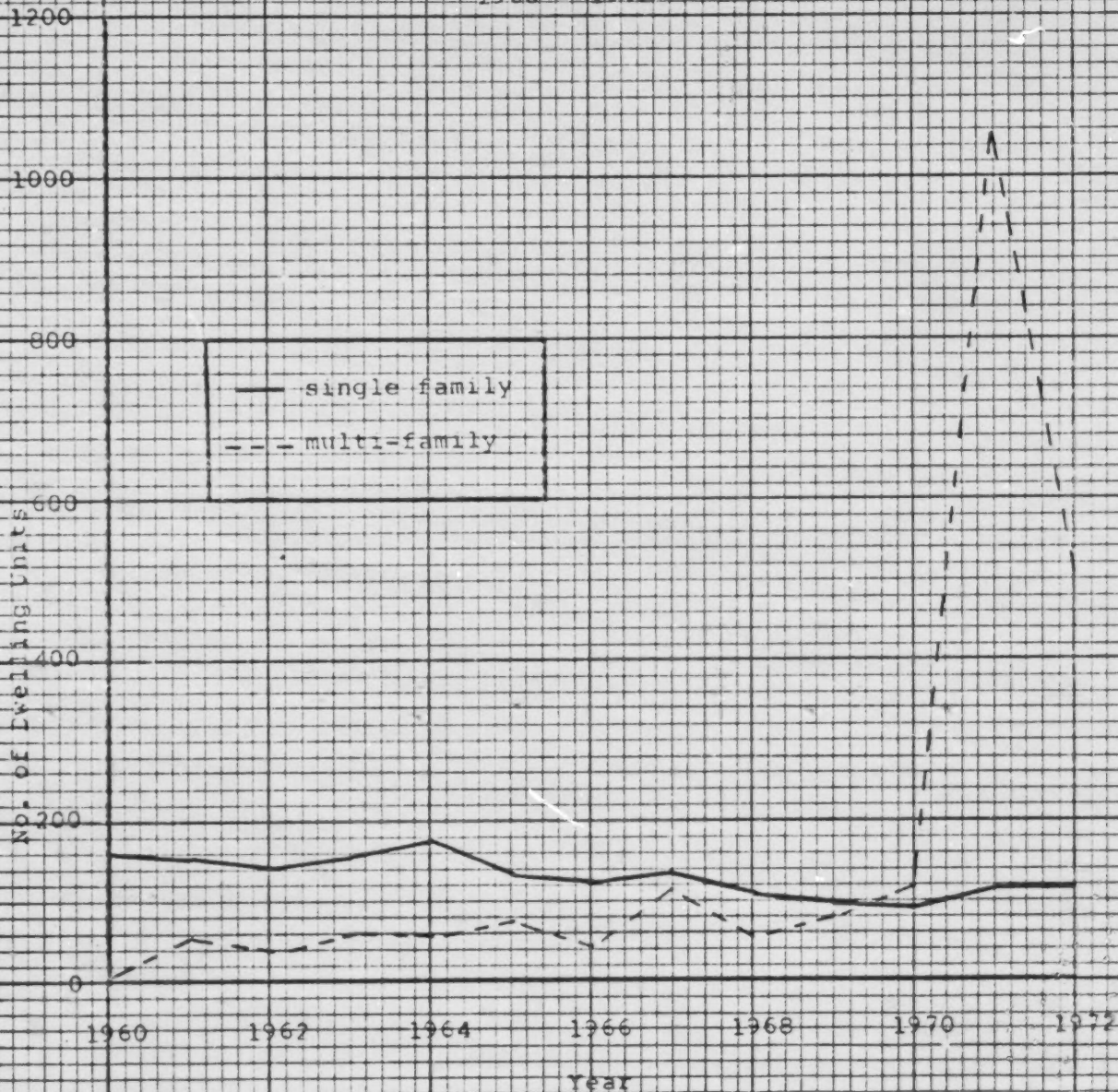
Second, the profile of apartment dwellers as opposed to single family home dwellers is necessary before assessing the impact of these individuals on the library or other city services. These characteristics are taken from the "Housing Impact Study" by city Planning Director Rizzo and show that, among other things, apartment dwellers are generally young adults, probably single or newly-married with a median age of 27 years.¹⁴ Single family homes, however, tend to attract an average age of 39 years for head of household and more established families with higher than median city incomes as opposed to those in apartments with income lower than the city median.

In addition, the apartments tend to attract "white collar" residents as opposed to "blue collar" residents for houses. A significant statistic is that only 26% of the apartment dwellers surveyed by Rizzo lived in the city prior to their new residence while 61% of the single family home people lived in Leominster prior to their new addresses.¹⁵

Also important, apartment residents tend not to be as involved in the community as single family homeowners. Voter registration and organizational participation tend to lag behind that of the rest of the city.

This profile would indicate that Leominster's apartment dwellers as a group present an interesting area of concern for library services. The attention that should be paid this group becomes even more critical when Leominster's population continues to expand and much of that growth comes from additional apartment dwellers.

FIGURE 6.
BUILDING ACTIVITY
IN
LEOMINSTER*
1960 - 1972



* Prepared by Planning Board, 12/72, based on building permits

- 1 "Areawide Topics Plan - Leominster, MA", prepared for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by Tibbetts, Abbett, McCarthy, and Stratton, Engineers and architects, September, 1972.
- 2 Final Environmental Statemtn for Interstate 190, Massachusetts Department of Public Works. December, 1973.
- 3 Berelson, Bernard. The Library's Public. Columbia University Press, New York, 1949, pp.19-50.
- 4 Bundy, Mary Lee. Metropolitan Public Library Users. University of Maryland, 1968.
- 5 Evans, Charles. Middle-Class Attitudes and Public Library Use. Labraries Unlimited, Inc., Littleton, Colorado, 1970, pp. 13-21.
- 6 Leominster, Massachusetts. "Street List", 1975
- 7 Division of Employment Security. "Massachusetts Trends in Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment". Vol. 2, no. 7, July, 1975.
- 8 1970 Census of Population and Housing: Census Tracts, Fitchburg - Leominster, Mass. SMSA, PHC (1) - 69, March, 1972.
- 9 "Growth Analysis and Potential As It Relates to School Site Selection", a memo prepared by City Planning Director William J. Rizzo to the Junior High School Site Selection Committee, September 23, 1974.
- 10 Curran Associates. "Water Supply and Wastewater: the Regional Plan", August, 1973.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 "Growth Analysis . . ."
- 13 Rizzo, William J., "Housing Impact Study", Leominster Planning Board, January 2, 1973, p.21.
- 14 Ibid. p.8.
- 15 Ibid. p. 10.

Chapter IV. Library Resources

Introduction

Any attempts at planning library services must begin with a basic understanding of current library resources. A comprehensive program of data collection was developed and implemented to provide information about the resources. Information obtained on the following aspects of the library's resources is presented in this chapter:

- a) origin and development
- b) organization and administration
- c) personnel
- d) financial support
- e) facilities
- f) relationship with other libraries
- g) collections

a. Origin and Development

The library is able to trace its origin from 1763 when approximately 100 books were collected from among the 743 residents and were housed in a pine wood case kept in Reverend Francis Gardner's study.¹ The materials belonged to the Leominster Social Library.

Almost 100 years later on May 5, 1856, a vote of the town meeting established the Leominster Public Library, and on June 9, 1856 Mr. Francis Tinker was appointed its first librarian.² The library existed on the funds appropriated by the town for the purchase of books and rent of the various locations used to house them until April, 1910 when the present library building was constructed at a total cost of 63,763.90.³ \$27,500 of this amount came from the Carnegie Foundation. The building of 12,750 square feet reflects the period and could be termed as being of the "Carnegie" style.

In 1966 an addition of 10,000 square feet was opened and today houses most of the direct public service areas of the library. The original building is now used primarily for children's services and behind-the-scenes technical and administrative responsibilities.

b. Organization and Administration

The city ordinances provide for the establishment of the public library department under the charge of a board of trustees consisting of six persons who are appointed by the mayor and subject to city council confirmation and who serve without compensation.⁴

From their own membership the board chooses by ballot a chairman and a secretary. Regularly scheduled meetings are held monthly, the date and hour of which are set by the board at its February organizational meeting.

The powers and duties of the board are summed up by Section 2-50 of the Revised Ordinances which states that "the board shall have the custody and management of the library and reading room and property owned by the city relating thereto, and may expend for library purposes such money as the city council may appropriate."⁵

The "General Policies of the Board of Trustees" adopted in September, 1975 further defines the purpose of the board as "the governing body of the library to ensure that the latter fulfills its responsibilities to provide effective services to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the community" and representing "the community as a whole in setting goals and objectives to meet these needs and in obtaining adequate facilities, staffing, and funding to implement the necessary programs and services".⁶

The "General Policies" also make a clear definition of the responsibilities of the board and of those of the library director. Simplistically, the board's functions focus on the general setting of community library objectives and policy making to meet those objectives while the director's responsibilities focus on providing input into the board's decisions and then implementing them. This arrangement has produced a very healthy situation in which an active directorship supervises all library operations under the ultimate authority of the board.

The library possesses a good job description file which is updated at least annually. Also reviewed annually are the library's personnel policies, which include staff selection, separations from service, and the working conditions (work weeks, vacations, sick leave, etc.) of the agency.

The primary lacks of the library organization appear to be that of no written statement of clear and specific objectives and no step-by-step plan for the future growth and development of the library.

Although the city ordinances and the "General Policies" of the board do not identify a specific set of objectives for the library, they do provide an organizational base for this next important step. The identification, articulation, and ratification of objectives is an extremely difficult process if it is carried beyond the level of general platitude. However, before specific policy statements can be developed, it is essential that the library board and staff, possibly, in cooperation with a citizens advisory group; articulate and approve a statement of objectives for the library. This means, for example, specifying the extent to which the library will attempt to serve the information needs of the community; that is, is it the objective of the library to limit its services to that of a book lending agency, or will it attempt to include additional general services or services to specific groups and, if so, to what extent?

This process must include a realistic assessment of the present and future financial resources available to achieve these objectives. Once objectives or goals have been established, the organization or resources (finances, staff, facilities, etc.) to achieve these aims will naturally follow. As this is done, specific policy statements regarding allocation of resources for desired effects can be developed, administered, monitored, and adjusted.

However, this should be done since the service areas of the library have evolved somewhat piecemeal rather than through a consolidated, well-thought out plan of public service.

c. Personnel

At present, the permanent salaried library staff consists of three professionals (Master's degree in Library Science); six pre-professionals (four with Bachelor Degree's and two with considerable library experience); five clerical staff; one half-time secretary; and one full-time custodian. Part-time help includes a college graduate working primarily in the Children's Room, a clerical person at the Circulation Desk, four high school pages, and a college student. In terms of full-time non-custodian personnel and full-time equivalents from part-time help, the staff totals 17 persons.

This number has proven totally inadequate in light of an ever-increasing workload. Except for the recent permanent retention of two previous Comprehensive Employment and Training Act positions, the library has established only one new full-time staff position since 1967 and that was the upgrading of a permanent part-time position. Even with these new positions, the library's lack of adequate numbers of personnel remains a problem. A recent study done by the library director based on comparisons with other libraries serving communities used for comparisons by the city's Personnel Board revealed that the Leominster Public Library staff numbers substantially smaller than those of this group.⁷

Table 30 reflects these communities in order of descending 1970 population.

Table 30. Study Communities By Population

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Population (1970)</u>
1	Haverhill	46,120
2	Fitchburg	43,343
3	Beverly	38,348
4	Melrose	33,180
5	Leominster	32,939
6	Needham	29,748
7	W. Springfield	28,641
8	Wellesley	28,051
9	Gloucester	27,941
10	Dedham	26,938
11	Danvers	26,151
12	Wakefield	25,402
13	Saugus	25,110
14	Winchester	22,269
15	Gardner	19,748

However, when ranked by the size of their staffs, Leominster moves from fifth in population to eleventh in this category as shown in Table 31.

Table 31. Study Communities by Staff Size

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Full-time and Equivalents</u>
1	Wellesley	58
2	Melrose	38
3	Fitchburg	35
4	Beverly	23
5	Haverhill	23
6	Danvers	22
7	Needham	20
8	Dedham	19
9	Winchester	18
10	Wakefield	17
11	Leominster	17
12	W. Springfield	16
13	Saugus	14
14	Gardner	13
15	Gloucester	13

This point comes into focus even clearer when viewed from the stand point of the average numbers of persons potentially served by each staff member as shown in the following table:

Table 32. Study Communities by Most
Persons Served Per Staff Member

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Persons Served Per Staff Member</u>
1	Gloucester	2149
2	Haverhill	2005
3	Leominster	1937
4	Saugus	1794
5	W. Springfield	1779
6	Beverly	1669
7	Gardner	1519
8	Wakefield	1494
9	Needham	1487
10	Dedham	1418
11	Fitchburg	1238
12	Winchester	1237
13	Danvers	1189
14	Melrose	873
15	Wellesley	484

Thus, Leominster, ranked fifth in population, is ranked near the bottom in terms of absolute number of staff and near the top in terms of the most persons to be served by each staff member. In fact, if Leominster were to obtain the median in this last category, it would have to hire five additional full-time personnel.

Another important factor revealed by that study is that Leominster's salary schedule coincides fairly well with the survey salary medians.

Table 33. Survey Salaries Compared with Leominster's

<u>Position</u>	<u>Survey Median</u>	<u>Leominster</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Director (MLS)	\$13,763 - \$16,973	\$14,731 - \$17,578	\$+968 to \$+605
Ass't. Dir.(MLS)	11,940 - 14,424	11,780 - 14,000	-160 to -424
Other MLS	10,046 - 12,375	10,675 - 12,375	+629 to 0
Pre-Prof. (BS)	9,278 - 10,677	9,670 - 10,925	+392 to +248
Pre-Prof.	8,492 - 10,072	8,827 - 10,084	+335 to - 12
Clerical	6,731 - 8,294	6,562 - 8,240	-169 to - 54

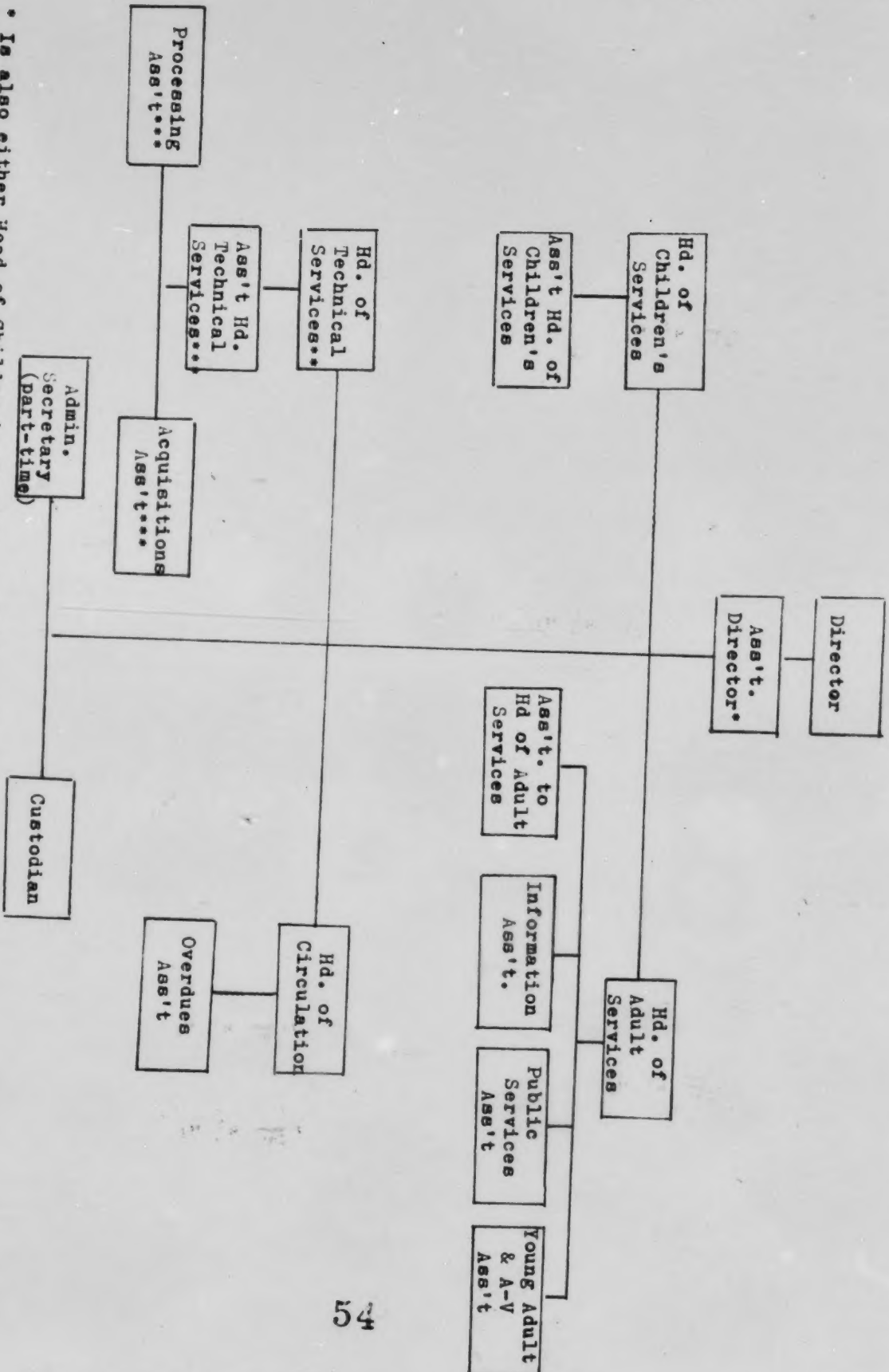
Another aspect of deficiency in personnel is the educational distribution of the staff. At present, there are three professional librarians, four pre-professionals by virtue of their college degrees, two pre-professionals by virtue of some college and many years of experience, and five clerical positions. According to the American Library Association's Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems approximately one-third of the staff would be professional. For Leominster, this would mean almost six professionals instead of three.

An organizational problem is demonstrated by the organization chart (figure 7). The Assistant Director, it is noted, always is also either the Head of Children's Services or the head of Adult Services. This doesn't allow enough professional time to be spent for technical processes, circulation, and especially, adult special services and programming. If the assistant directorship is attached to Children's Services, it then becomes impossible to serve well both the general and specific administrative functions. The position of Head of Adult Services is already too large with responsibilities in collection maintenance, materials selection, supervision, information services, etc. without the added general administrative burden associated with the position of Assistant Director. In fact, although the library has been able to do some programming for adults, this area needs much more attention and is a substantial weakness of the library system.

LEOMINSTER PUBLIC LIBRARY
ORGANIZATION CHART

47

FIGURE 7



* Is also either Head of Children's Services or Head of Adult Services.
 ** Works for the Head of Adult Services when on Information duty.
 *** Works for the Head of Circulation when on Circulation duty.

Therefore, it is recommended that an additional professional position be created so that the heads of Children's Services and Adult Services would then be able to focus on their specialties and an Assistant Director could assume the necessary administrative responsibility and have direct duties in the supervision of technical processes and circulation and the development of meaningful adult programming.

In summary, the personnel situation is the most critical facing the library. Without a good staff in efficient numbers to meet the variety of public needs, the library becomes a "bookbarn", a passive warehouse storing materials rather than an active, vital community service institution meeting a collection of ever-changing public demands. Because of personnel changes and additions, internal reorganization, and a dedicated staff, the library has been able to assimilate growing use to this point and has, in some areas, been able to expand services qualitatively and quantitatively. However, the saturation point has been reached, and the addition of personnel is absolutely critical to library service.

d. Financial Support

The financial resources of the library are generated primarily by city appropriations against the tax base. In 1974 - '75 city appropriations included \$129,885.81 for salaries and wages, \$81,426.07 for regular expenses, \$2,264.50 for capital improvements, and \$4,000 in revenue sharing funds for hourly assistants. The total represents \$217,576.38 or \$6.60 per capita, using the 1970 population. The most recent statewide figures available at this time are for FY 1975 and show library income for the population group of 25,000 to 49,999 at median per capita library income level of \$7.60 with a low of \$2.19 to a high of 15.76. Statewide for this group, the ratio of expenditures in the major categories was salaries 69.0%; materials 17.0%; and other, 14.0%. Leominster had respective figures of 61%, 22%, and 17%. Since Leominster's expenditure of \$1.44 per capita for materials for this period was nothing extraordinary (\$1.38 for the group), it is safe to assume that its relatively low salary and relatively high materials percentages evolve from less emphasis on personnel numbers and salaries, rather than from more emphasis on building materials collections.

In fact, this relatively low percentage of the library's expenditures for salaries is part of a recent trend as reflected in the following figures:

Table 34. Salary % of Expenditures 1965 - 1975

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Budget</u>	<u>Salaries</u>	<u>Salary %</u>
'74 - '75	\$215,312	\$133,886	62.1
'73 - '74(18 mos.)	268,042	167,302	62.4
1972	167,557	104,851	62.6
1971	156,657	104,235	66.5
1970	138,912	89,763	64.6
1965	72,877	51,445	70.6

This trend is further reflective of the critical staffing needs of the library that were discussed earlier.

Internally, the present fiscal year's budget can be divided into the categories and amounts shown in the following table.

Table 35. Budget by Program

<u>Program</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>%</u>
Adult Services	\$90,440	38.5
Circulation	31,509	13.4
Children's Services	35,991	15.3
Technical Services	25,406	10.8
Maintenance	30,063	12.8
Administration	21,654	9.2
	<u>\$235,063</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Another perspective of library financial resources can be gained by examining the library budget vs. total city expenditures:

Table 36. Library Spending

<u>Year</u>	<u>Tot. City Payments</u>	<u>Libr. Exp.</u>	<u>% of City</u>
FY '75	\$22,160,700	\$217,576	0.96
'73-'74(18 mos.)	29,198,408	268,042	0.92
1972	18,665,720	167,557	0.90
1971	18,090,889	156,657	0.87
1970	14,860,072	138,912	0.93
1956	10,825,195	72,872	0.67

As the table indicates, the 1970's have seen significant increases from the 1960's and a relatively stable percentage of city expenditures.

An examination of expenditures for books over a similar period reveals a movement from a position of weakness to one of relative strength.

Table 37. Book Expenditures

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
FY75	\$39,500
1973	30,900
1970	25,459
1965	11,561

Another source of library income is federal revenue-sharing funds. These monies are not appropriated to the library on a regular basis, but the library has benefited from them for specific one-time projects, including land-taking for a parking lot, the installation of same, and several smaller capital improvement projects.

Also worthy of note is trust funds income. The library has over \$68,000 in various trust funds. Some of the funds are unrestricted in the use while others allow only their income produced to be used for library purposes. The library's Board of Trustees control these funds and use them only for important projects like a recent renovation of the Children's Room, the initiation of a circulating art print collection, and the establishment of an audio-visual collection for the Children's Room.

Other funds that are theoretically available to the library include a direct state aid grant for public libraries of 37.5 cents per capita or \$12,352 annually based on Leominster's 1970 population. To obtain these funds the library must meet some very minimal standards of materials expenditures, service hours, and qualifications for the library's administrator. While the funds are appropriated for library use, this source of potential additional income is used for tax relief since it is subtracted from the total library allocation and then applied to library expenses.

The library also is the recipient of an occasional Library Services and Construction Act grant for a specific project, such as service to the Leominster Hospital or Spanish Center. These grants have been relatively small (\$1500 at most) and center on the purchase of materials since limitations of staff time will not allow for larger or more active projects.

In summary, the final support of the library has not been outstanding but, in several areas, certainly adequate. The first financial priority should be additional funding for personnel. The continued growth of the materials collections is also very important, particularly in light of weak support just a few years ago. In general, the library is having problems in keeping up with public needs without substantial additional funding.

e. Facilities

As noted earlier, the Leominster Public Library is composed of a 1910 Carnegie-type building of 12,760 square feet with a 1966 addition of 10,000 square feet. The only direct public service areas presently continued in the original building are children's services and a multi-purpose meeting and small program room. The balance of the original building is office space and staff work areas with the original main stack areas being integrated with the newer shelving areas.

The library is located just one block off the center of the city across the street from the city hall, easily accessible but not in the major traffic pattern. A twenty-five car parking lot is adjacent to the rear of the building and is usually adequate for library users. One slight problem is that the lot is approximately 150 feet from the main entrance. A rear door emptying directly into the lot is an emergency exit and can be opened from the outside only with a key. The main entrance is located to the left side of the building, is on ground level, and is about 100 feet from the street. The library's location is marked by a plaque mounted in a setting of small boulders but difficult to see from the street and an attractive wooden sign stating library hours and hanging high above parked cars and easily seen by vehicle and pedestrian traffic is mounted in the front lawn of the library.

Other external factors include an excellent architectural blending of the original building and the addition which are not strikingly different in outward appearance for the casual observer, a book drop for after hours' return of library materials, and a good impression of well-lit library activity since the front entrance and its stairwell leading to the second floor are almost all glass and, therefore, present a good view of what is happening inside.

Internally, the Circulation and Information Desks are conveniently placed and immediately noticeable upon entering, as is the card catalog. Simple but effective signs hang from the ceiling to designate major areas or services including periodicals, fiction, records, reference, pamphlet file, and listening station. Other activities located in this area include several paperback racks, new books shelving, large-type books, a copy machine, a suggestion book, known as "Peoplespeak" where the public can make comments or suggestions and read the answers made by library staff, and, of course, rest rooms and a water fountain.

Obviously, this area is very busy, and while the noise is attempted to be kept at a comfortable level for all, the great amount of traffic, phones ringing, etc. prevent this from being a very quiet study area.

That responsibility is maintained on the floor directly above that of the main entrance. Like its first floor counter-part, this second floor is a very open, rectangular-like structure with its floor carpeted and walls painted attractively. They are both well-lighted and have large windows along two walls. The second floor has two primary purposes: shelving for most of the non-fiction collection and providing a quieter study area. There is an Information Desk, manned during busy periods, as well as a water fountain and rest rooms. The library's microfilm collection and equipment is located on this floor also. Recently, the library has set up a small young adult area on this floor. It contains both hardcover and paperback books, periodicals, games, etc. designed to appeal to that age group. Surprisingly enough, this area has caused very few conflicts with the quieter study aspect of the balance of the floor.

Completing these major areas are the stack areas. Of course, bookstacks are located in more open space on both floors, but there are also two areas containing only stacks and floor stack area is on the same level as the second floor. The stacks on the first floor, however, are half a floor above the remainder of that floor. This situation arose because these stack areas (and a third beneath them used for magazine, newspaper, and local history storage) are part of the original building coordinated with the addition.

This situation has advantage of all available space but also confuses an occasional member of the public because to go from the card catalog to the second floor proper where much of the non-fiction is located requires one to go up a short stairway through one stack area to another stairway and then through the second floor stack area. The alternative to this route is to go up the stairwell near the front door. In either case, there is no direct route to the second floor and despite maps and directional signs, people sometimes get confused. The direct exit from the second floor down the stairs and out the front door without having to go by the main Circulation Desk also lends itself to book theft.

The only public service area in the three floors of the original building is the Children's Room. The transition of this area from being bland and rather dormat into

a colorful, vibrant, and highly successful Children's Room is worthy of a study of its own. Suffice it to say here that within less than a year and a half all available space has been utilized very efficiently despite some severe physical limitations like support columns being in the way, etc. The room is carpeted, set-up well, and has a small audio-visual room contained in it.

The most serious problems facing the Children's Room is that its potential for future growth is virtually nonexistent. The only possibilities would be minor ones such as the removal of the room's separate circulation desk to gain a few more square feet. The growth of the children's book collection will also be in jeopardy in the not-too-distant future.

The other floors of the original building contain staff work areas on the basement floor and offices and a conference room around the balcony on the third floor. The offices are without carpeting, drapes, or partitions separating areas. The meeting room, which seats about fifty persons, is the only available space for library programs and is also used for meetings of various community organizations.

The building has an elevator which stops at every floor or "half-floor" and is used only by staff members.

In general, shelving in the adult section, both in terms of linear feet and general area, appears adequate for immediate needs. Despite the need to continue increasing the book expenditures and, therefore, needing more space for these additional titles, a combination of some available space and a constant upgrading of the book collection through weeding will postpone the need for additional shelving for probably three years. At that time, the most logical method for absorbing the collection growth would be to begin adding taller bookstacks on the second floor. This would result in the slight loss of some sitting area, but that would not be critical for some time.

There are some shelving problems, however, in more specific areas, e.g. oversize, and reference materials are in need of some rearranging to generate more shelving space.

Another slight problem is the size of the meeting room which will not allow for an adult gathering of more than about fifty people. This hampers programming and community use. A small auditorium seating 200-300 would be ideal but not critical at this time.

Also a problem is not having a local history and genealogy room where old and rare materials can be kept under good climate controls. Presently, these materials are stored in the basement stack area, which because of the lack of air flow is often over-heated.

The most critical facility problem at present is the Children's Room. There is no room left for expansion and even the possibility of having to add one bookstack in the not-too-distant future will precipitate a minor crisis in room rearrangement.

These problems taken individually or collectively are not enough to justify even the initial planning stages for a possible addition at this time. Whether the pressures from increasing collections and public demands would soon force the consideration of any sort of building program remains to be answered in the next several years of the library's growth. In general, however, the facility is functional, pleasant, efficiently set-up, and adequate for at least the next five years.

f. Relationship with other libraries

The Leominster Public Library has a formal direct relationship with 68 other public libraries through the state-funded Central Massachusetts Regional Library System. Films, inter-library loans, free reciprocal borrowing privileges for non-residents, and telephone reference service are among the benefits of membership. The libraries of Fitchburg and Worcester are included in the system, thereby allowing relatively easy geographic access to their resources by Leominster residents directly. Leominster also benefits from Worcester's membership in the Worcester Consortium, a cooperative alliance including Holy Cross, Clark, Worcester State, U. Mass. Medical, and other academic and special libraries, and from the Boston Public Library's role of "library of last recourse" in the state. Thus, resources from all types of libraries from many sections not only of the state but of the nation became available to Leominster. Last year 326 inter-library loan requests were filled by other libraries, and the library borrowed 856 films that were viewed by a total audience of 47,003.

Intra-city cooperation is less formal and, at this time, less tangible in its benefits for public library users. School libraries in Leominster are, in general, poorly developed. The Leominster High School, South East Elementary, and Fall Brook Elementary have the best-developed library facilities. The other schools are attempting to establish the best possible library facilities but are forced to use converted closets and hallways. This situation has come about primarily because of crowded conditions that have not allowed the space for library development and because of the age of many of the schools, built before the importance of school libraries was realized.

Communication between school librarians and the public library is good. The latter is represented at the monthly meetings of the former. While the activities between the types of libraries has been restricted thus far to sharing information, such as the development of a union list of serials, the potential and interest is available for other cooperative activities.

There are seven school librarians in the school system. Four of these have MLS degrees while the others have librarian's certification from the Board of Education. The type of service the school children receive depends, to a large extent, on the age of the building. Most of the elementary schools are without full-fledged library facilities and are

open only the one day a week that the librarian is there or whenever volunteer mothers are available. Because of the lack of space the amount and variety of materials available at many of these facilities are very lacking.

There can be little doubt that the under-development of meaningful school library facilities and related service has put an added burden on the public library. How much of a burden and what that means for the public library should be studied further.

g. Collections

Despite needed advances in the area of non-print materials, the book collection remains the backbone of the library's collections. An analysis was done to evaluate that collection both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Book expenditures were discussed earlier in Table 37, showing substantial increases in funds spent on books. This is reflected further in the accessions for similar years as shown below:

Table 38. Accessions and Withdrawals

<u>Year</u>	<u>Accessions</u>	<u>Withdrawals</u>	<u>Collection Size</u>
1965	2,875	1,420	58,726
1970	5,568	3,128	71,983
1971	6,777	4,890	73,870
1972	5,364	4,428	74,806
'73-'74	6,651	4,750	76,707
'74-'75	6,440	4,273	78,874

These figures reveal many interesting trends, the most obvious of which has been the substantial growth of the book collection during the last ten years. This, of course, has come about because of increased expenditures. In addition to a healthy number of accessions, it is significant to note an increased and also substantial amount of withdrawals. This would indicate an active weeding policy on the part of the library to eliminate obsolete or unused materials. This is vital when attempting to establish the library as a meaningful resource center. Both accessions and withdrawals exceed the 5% annual rate suggested by the profession.

It is interesting to note, however, that when compared to those communities discussed in the personnel study shown earlier, Leominster Public Library does not fare well. The following tables are based on 1970 populations and 1974 - '75 data, the latest available at this time.

(Table 39 on following page)

Table 39. 1974 - 1975 Collection Size Comparison

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Collection Size</u>
1. Haverhill	174,795
2. Fitchburg	160,369
3. Wellesley	151,475
4. Needham	141,600
5. Dedham	112,601
6. Melrose	107,171
7. Beverly	106,991
8. Winchester	101,101
9. Wakefield	92,463
10. Danvers	89,054
11. W. Springfield	81,054
12. Leominster	78,724
13. Saugus	73,572
14. Gardner	69,908
15. Gloucester	69,853

Table 40. 1974 - 1975 Volumes Per Capita Comparison

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>Vols. Per Capita</u>
1. Wellesley	5.40
2. Needham	4.76
3. Winchester	4.54
4. Dedham	4.18
5. Haverhill	3.79
6. Fitchburg	3.70
7. Wakefield	3.64
8. Gardner	3.54
9. Danvers	3.41
10. Melrose	3.23
11. Saugus	2.93
12. W. Springfield	2.83
13. Beverly	2.79
14. Gloucester	2.50
15. Leominster	2.39

Thus, despite Leominster's being fifth in population among these communities, its book collection's size is ranked near or at the bottom. To keep pace with the population projection of 54,207 by the year 2000 the library will have to add at least an average of 1200 titles per year above the 5% accession-withdrawal trade-off. The book collection by that time should be at least 108,414 based on present minimum standards.

Qualitatively, the book collection also appears to be gaining in strength. To test the age tendency of the collection a random sample of the library's shelflist was done with a sampling of 375 titles. Their distribution by imprint date and type of material is shown below:

Table 41. Shelflist Sample by Imprint Date

<u>Date</u>	<u>Fiction</u>	<u>N.F.</u>	<u>Youth</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1971-75	24	72	31	127	33.9
1966-70	24	66	19	109	29.1
1961-65	8	37	10	55	14.7
1956-60	6	12	6	24	6.4
1951-55	2	15	4	21	5.6
1946-50	0	6	3	9	2.4
1945	<u>4</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>8.0</u>
TOTAL	68	231	76	375	100.0
	(18.1%)	(61.6%)	(20.3%)		

The sample is indicative of a strong trend to new materials with 63.0% of the titles having an imprint date of 1966 or newer due principally to the surge in book expenditures during that period. It is important to note that in the critical area of adult non-fiction 75.8% of those titles were 1961 or newer. 65.8% of the youth titles samples were 1966 or newer, showing the attempts the library has made in recent years to upgrade that area of the collection. There can be no doubt that increases in numbers of titles and in their newness have stimulated a significant portion of the library's circulation increases and have come as a direct result of the library's efforts in obtaining additional funding for materials.

The sample also indicates certain trends in the "on shelf" vs. "circulating" ratio, as well as a percentage of the collection that can be considered "missing".

The "in circulation" figures revealed in Table 42 indicate a strong percentage (23.4% adult; 32.9% juvenile; 25.3% overall) of the library's book collection in circulation at any one time. The "missing" items, books that remain in the shelflist although they cannot be accounted for in the circulation files or on the shelves, can be presumed to be items that have been lost for whatever reason (e.g. theft) or withdrawn items for which the shelflist entry has not been withdrawn. At any rate, since it has been almost twenty years since a full-scale inventory of the book collection was done, the 9.1% missing overall is a low figure

and will not require further action except for replacing or withdrawing the missing materials as the library becomes aware of them.

Table 42. Book Use and Accountability from Shelflist Sample

<u>Category</u>	<u>Adult (%)</u>	<u>Juvenile (%)</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
In circ.	70 (23.4%)	25 (32.9%)	95	25.3%
On shelf	198 (66.2%)	48 (63.2%)	246	65.6%
Missing	31 (10.4%)	3 (3.9%)	34	9.1%
	299 (100%)	76 (100%)	375	100.0%

Although books dominate the collections, it is important to mention other aspects of materials. The library currently subscribes to over 200 periodicals, including library professional materials, several daily and weekly newspapers, and a variety of magazines ranging from those with general interest or some reference value to those primarily for browsing. Subscriptions are reviewed annually for possible additions or deletions. Back issues of many important reference tools are kept for at least ten years, usually on microfilm or bound, and seem adequate enough for present demands. The library should, however, give some consideration to additional magazines on microfilm since space is becoming a problem and the collections are, at present, stored in three different locations. Another problem facing the periodicals collection is that of facing more and more demands and requests with a budget that has remained the same for three years while increased prices have rampaged. It is hoped that the library's pending budget request will solve this problem.

In the area of non-print materials, the library has a collection of over 1900 long-playing records. The selections run the spectrum of what is available on records, with about 300 accessions on an annual basis. Two years ago a project to upgrade the collection and place more emphasis on popular recordings produced a spectacular increase in use of about 110% in one year. This use has increased to the point where record use is a very significant part of the library's circulation.

Other non-print collections include that of 110 framed art prints that circulate well over 600 times per year; a

few films that are mostly for children with virtually all film services being handled through the regional library system; and a collection of audio-visual hardware and software started recently in the Children's Room.

In summary, the collections are relatively efficient. Time, continually growing book expenditures, and careful collection maintenance will probably yield an excellent book collection in about ten years. Periodicals are in need of additional funding. Audio-visual collection of all types need to grow and still remain, for the most part, in their infancy.

- 1 "History of the Leominster Public Library", 1957.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 The Revised Ordinances of the City of Leominster, Mass.,
1973.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 "General Policies of the Board of Trustees of the
Leominster Public Library", 1975.
- 7 "Personnel Study", September, 1975.
- 8 Bureau of Library Extension. "Comparative Public Library
Report FY1975", March 1976.

Chapter V. Library Services

It is the carefully planned range of services that transform a library from a "bookbarn", a warehouse for storing books, into a vital agency meeting a variety of community needs. Therefore, to understand the current status of the library in attempting to meet these needs it is necessary to identify, describe, and analyze the various services which it provides.

The services discussed in this chapter include hours of service; registration; circulation; information, including inter-library loan; services to groups; and miscellaneous services.

A. Library Service Hours. The Leominster Public Library is currently open 68 hours per week. During the summer months it is open 64 hours per week, closing Friday nights because of low user frequency at that time during that season. The distribution of regular hours can be seen below:

Figure 8. Library Hours

	9	10	AM	11	12	1	2	3	4	PM	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL HOURS
Sun.																0
Mon.																12
Tues.																12
Wed.																12
Thurs.																12
Fri.																12*
Sat.																8

* 9AM - 5PM during summer

Except for Friday nights when it always closes at 5 PM, the Children's Room is open whenever the adult section is open.

Studies to indicate whether this is efficient have to date proven inconclusive. In addition, the library is the only one in its area to be open all day Saturday during the summer. However, an informal survey taken during the summer of 1975 indicated that an average of 270 people entered the library for four different Saturdays that were surveyed. This is a substantial amount of use, particularly in light of the minimal staffing that is done on those days. However, use between 2:00 PM and closing is substantially curtailed.

The library is not at present open on Sundays, but growing needs and public demands dictate an evaluation of such an action soon. This possibility would depend, of course, on additional funding.

Except for the question of possibly too much service time in the Children's Room and too little on Sundays, the library's hours are substantial and meet most of the public's needs and a standard of cost efficiency.

B. Registration

In order to identify some characteristics of the library borrowers, studies were made of the library's registration files. Before discussing that information, however, it would be useful to look at some general characteristics of the library registration. Anyone living in, working in, or holding a valid library card from a Massachusetts community is eligible for a Leominster Public Library card. The only restriction on children is that anyone under the age of twelve years must have his parent sign the registration card, leaving it the parent's decision as to what age the child should be to obtain the card. Once a card is issued, a child may use any of the library's services and may go anywhere in the public sectors of the building.

The library's registration file is very up-to-date since in October 1973 a new circulation and registration system was established with all new library cards being issued and the borrowers' file being uniformly updated for the first time. In the slightly more than two years of new registrations, approximately 14,650 new borrowers' cards have been issued as of November, 1975. Assuming a non-resident registration of 10%, this leaves a total of 13,185 Leominster persons with library cards within the last two years. This represents 37.3% of the present population - substantially higher than nationwide figures of 25-30% and significantly high for a "blue collar" community, which in 1970 had only 48.5% of its population 25 years and over completing high school.

A random sample of 378 persons was taken from the registration file. Table 43 shows the age distribution of the sample.

Table 43. Age Distribution of Registration Sample

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
11 years & younger	62	16.4
12 - 20 yrs.	131	34.7
21 yrs. & over	<u>185</u>	<u>48.9</u>
	378	100.0

The most important statistic here is the very high percentage in the 12-20 year old category. This is significantly higher than the general population ration for this group and is especially important to a library which does very little in the way of specific young adult services and programs.

A breakdown of males/females by age group is shown below:

Table 44. Registration Distribution
By Sex Within Age Groups

	<u>11 yrs. & Under</u>		<u>12 - 20 Yrs.</u>		<u>21 & Over</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Males	76	36.1	50	38.2	71	38.4	147	38.9
Females	36	63.9	81	61.8	114	61.6	231	61.6
TOTAL	62	100.0	131	100.0	185	100.0	378	100.0

These last two tables clearly indicate the substantial majority of registrants to be females. The surprising factor is not that that is true since this characteristic is usual, but that the percentages are so consistent throughout the age groups. One might have anticipated, for instance, that expecially the youngest group would be relatively close to an even split.

A view of the percentage of registrants continued in each census tract as contrasted with the general population percentage as shown in Table 45.

Table 45. Population vs. Registrant Distribution
by Census Tract

<u>Tract #</u>	<u>% of '70 City Pop.</u>	<u>% of City Registrants</u>
7091	3.0	4.4
7092	32.6	35.4
7093	2.2	2.9
7094	17.5	12.0
7095	15.3	16.4
7096	5.2	2.0
7097	24.2	26.9
	100.0	100.0

To a large extent, this information bears out the profiles discussed earlier. Tracts 7094 and 7096 with relatively low education, median family income, etc. show significantly lower registration levels than their population percentages would indicate. Conversely, 7094 and 7097 with higher educational levels, greater family income, etc. show slightly higher than their population percentages would indicate. 7093 probably fares better than expected because of the fact that the library is located within its boundaries. Tracts 7092 and 7095 could very well have done better because of the population growth that has taken place in those areas of the city.

The registration sample revealed also that 7.8% of the registrants were non-residents, and that 45.6% of the sample lived within a mile (walking distance) of the library.

C. Circulation

A random sample of the circulation for the due date of November 19, 1975 for "28 day" materials and November 12, 1975 for "14 day" materials (predominantly new materials) also reveals many interesting items. By way of clarification, the charge system involved is a Regiscope photographic machine with a common due date of Wednesday for all materials. Materials for both loan periods are charged out on the same machine with their own concurrent transaction numbers.

A random sample of 400 transactions was taken from the circulation film. Table 46 shows the age distribution of the sample.

Table 46. Age Distribution of User Sample

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
11 yrs. & under	28	7.0
12 - 20 years	123	30.8
21 years & over	<u>249</u>	<u>62.2</u>
	400	100.0

A further breakdown of males/females by age group is shown below:

Table 47. User Distribution
By Sex Within Age Group

	<u>11 Yrs. & Under</u>		<u>12-20 Yrs.</u>		<u>21 Yrs. & Over</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Males	17	60.7	52	42.3	86	34.5	155	38.8
Females	11	39.3	71	57.7	163	65.5	245	61.2
TOTAL	28	100.0	123	100.0	249	100.0	400	100.0

The most striking figures represented by this table deal with the high percentage of males 11 years and under using the library compared to females in that age group. Whether this is actually true or a result of too small a sample of this age group (since most of this group would be using the Children's Room and its separate circulation system) can only be determined by further study of the Children's Room circulation.

At any rate, males do show slightly better than registration in the 12-20 age category and less than registration in the 21-and-over category. Most strikingly, 21 and over females alone accounted for 40.7% of the total circulation sample. As in registration, the 12-20 group shows a great deal of activity despite little in the way of services and programming designed specifically for it.

Since the library has a separate charge system for the Children's Room, the individuals (mostly 11 years and younger) that use that area will probably only charge out children's materials at the main circulation desk if they have lost their cards or are new borrowers. It is safe to assume, therefore, that 6.8% of the use that they represent is primarily displayed by that age group's use of the adult services area. Also significant is the substantial use by the 12-20 year old category.

A comparison on census tract populations with the registration and use percentages are shown on the following table:

Table 48. Population, Registration, & Use
Distribution by Census Tract

Tract #	% of '70 Pop.	% of City Regist.	% of City Users	Borrowing
				Index
7091	3.0	4.4	1.8	.41
7092	32.6	35.4	31.0	.88
7093	2.2	2.9	1.8	.62
7094	17.5	12.0	10.0	.83
7095	15.3	16.4	16.2	.99
7096	5.2	2.0	5.4	2.7
7097	24.2	26.9	31.2	1.2

The "Borrowing Index" is obtained by dividing the percentage of borrowers in each tract by its percentage of registrant. Any number over "1" shows heavier use than the registration would indicate.

The most significant findings include that Tract 7091, despite a strong registration percentage, is surprisingly low in user percentage; 7093 parallels the action of 7091 and reflects the lower use percentage that one might have expected also in registrations; 7094 drops the most in use also, probably displaying heavy socio-economic factors at work; 7095 remains very stable in all categories despite

some distance and traffic problems; 7096 displays strong use after weak registration with an index of 2.7; and 7097 with relatively high education and income levels and library proximity establishes itself as the most significant area of library users.

The user sample also revealed a 2.2% non-resident use factor (compared to 7.8% for registration) and a percentage of 55.4% living within one mile of the library (compared to 45.6% for registration, both facts further demonstrating that distance to the library does, indeed, influence library use.)

A look at the types of materials shown borrowed in the user sample also reveals some important information. Table 49 shows the breakdown by categories.

Table 49. Circulation Sample by Category

<u>Category</u>	<u>14 Day</u>		<u>28 Day</u>		<u>% of All Circulation</u>
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	
Fiction	59	52.2	55	19.2	28.5
Paperback	--	---	45	15.7	11.3
LP's	36	31.9	--	---	9.0
Children's	--	---	19	6.6	4.8
000's	0	0	4	1.4	1.0
100's	1	.9	6	2.1	1.8
200's	0	0	4	1.4	1.0
300's	3	2.6	17	5.9	5.0
400's	0	0	1	.3	.3
500's	0	0	10	3.5	2.5
600's	5	4.4	51	17.8	14.0
700's	2	1.8	30	10.5	8.0
800's	0	0	6	2.1	1.5
900's	6	5.3	21	7.3	6.7
Biog.	1	.9	9	3.1	2.5
Misc.	--	--	9	3.1	2.3
TOTALS	113	100.0	287	100.0	100.0

Important findings include the ration of "28 day" to "14 day" loans (71.7% to 28.3%); the importance of new fiction (14.5% of total circulation); the strong circulation of records (9.0% of circulation while only about 2% of the materials owned by the library; and the strength of non-fiction circulation (44.2% overall), especially that of the 600 and 700's.

A similar but smaller sample was taken for the same November 19 due date from the independent charge system serving the Children's Room. All materials have a common due date and only one loan period of "28 days".

A sample of 200 transactions displays the following age distribution:

Table 50. Age Distribution of Children's
User Sample

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
11 yrs. & under	119	59.5
12-20 years	20	10.0
21 yrs. & over	<u>61</u>	<u>30.5</u>
	200	100.0

A further breakdown of males/females is shown below:

Table 51. Children's User Distribution
By Sex Within Age Group

	<u>11 Yrs. & Under</u>		<u>12-20 Yrs.</u>		<u>21 Yrs. & Over</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Males	44	37.0	5	25.0	8	13.1	57	28.5
Females	75	63.0	15	75.0	53	86.9	143	71.5
TOTAL	119	100.0	20	100.0	61	100.0	200	100.0

Once again, these figures display very strong female use in relation to that of males in all age groups. It is reasonably safe to assume that those in the "21 and over" category are predominantly parents charging out materials for their children and that mothers, at least in this sample, who perform this function outnumber fathers by over 6 to 1. More importantly, there are substantial differences in the younger groups, further reinforcing the stronger female library use pattern.

It is also significant to note that if one eliminates the "21 and over" category, one finds that 98.6% of the remaining sample were 13 years and younger. This shows the Children's Room, which is aiming at the general category of individuals through the sixth grade, is hitting the mark.

Comparing this user sample by census tract with the 1970 populations by tract reveals an interesting pattern:

Table 52. Population vs. Children's Use by
Census Tract

<u>Tract #</u>	<u>% of '70 Pop.</u>	<u>% of City Children's Users</u>
7091	3.0	8.2
7092	32.6	28.4
7093	2.2	4.9
7094	17.5	8.7
7095	15.3	12.0
7096	5.2	6.6
7097	24.2	31.1

Distance would appear to have influenced use even more than in the adult sample. Tracts 7093 and 7097 show high relative use and are the two tracts closest to the library. Tracts 7092 and 7095 had relatively high ratios of children per family in 1970 but also have most of their populations living significant distances from the library, precluding any significant amount of children coming to the library without adults driving them. Tract 7091, on the other hand, had by far the highest number of children per family in 1970, which could account for the very high percentage it represented in this sample. 7096 displays consistency with the adult sample. 7094 drops very significantly, again probably because of socio-economic factors.

The distance from the library consideration is even more dramatic when it is realized that 114 of the 200 sampled lived within one mile (walking distance) of the library. That 57% is consistent with the 55.4% that was revealed by the adult circulation sample. Replotting the portion (139 of 200) of the sample that represented the "under 21" age group reveals an even higher percentage (59.3) that lived within one mile, displaying the distance factor to be perhaps an even greater influence for the children.

Also significant in this sample is the distribution of the types of materials being borrowed:

Table 53. Children's Circulation by Type

<u>Category</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Easy Books	83	41.5
Fiction	34	17.0
Non-Fiction	60	30.0
Paperbacks	15	7.5
Other	8	4.0
	<u>200</u>	<u>100.0</u>

The most significant figures shown by this sample are the heavy use of the "easy books" (picture and lower grade books) and a strong use of paperbacks, which was also seen in the adult sample.

It is very important to stress that these findings for both samples are for a very limited period and are not strictly statistically valid for an entire year. However, the information is indicative of certain trends that have been identified and can be used to identify some user and non-user characteristics so as to serve the community as well as possible.

Before leaving the area of circulation, it is significant to discuss briefly the recent circulation history of the library. Figures 9, 10, and 11 present the monthly averages for the past three years in the areas of children's, adult, and total circulations. These graphs reflect substantially more use in March and less in June, probably influenced by school assignments and warm weather non-library activities respectively. The other months appear to be reasonably consistent with each other, showing some fluctuations but no pattern clearly defined as "seasonal use".

To emphasize the dramatic increase in circulation during the last few years, it would be meaningful to examine the trend of recent annual circulation statistics. Figure 12 represents the library's circulation totals for the past ten years. Obviously, it has significantly increased in the last three years only - approximately 50%. During that period per capita circulation has increased from a somewhat low 4.2 to 6.4, slightly above the state average and certainly high for a "blue collar" community with only 48.5% of its 1970 population over 25 years of age as high school graduates.

Figure 9
Children's Circulation By Month
Average 1973-1975

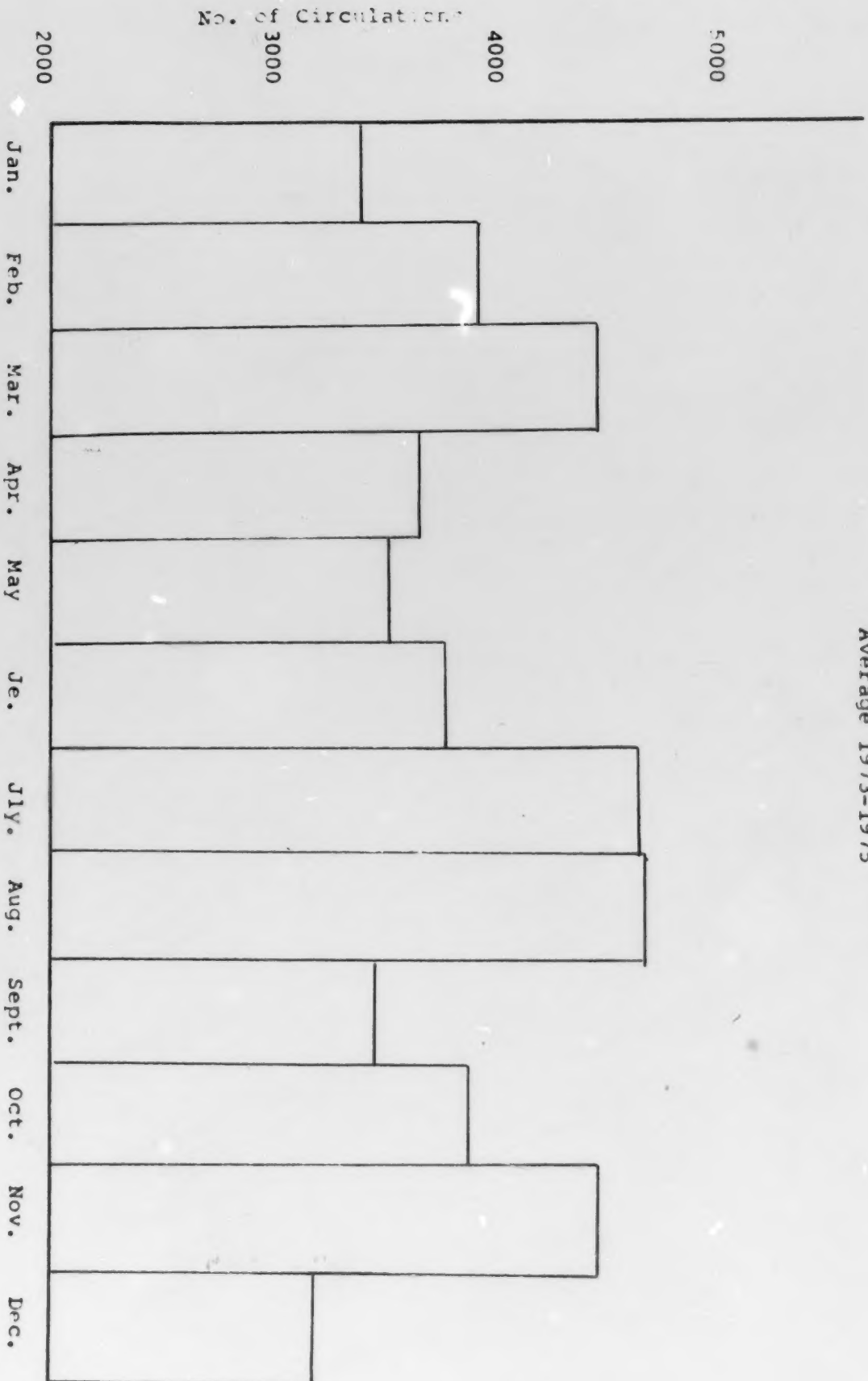
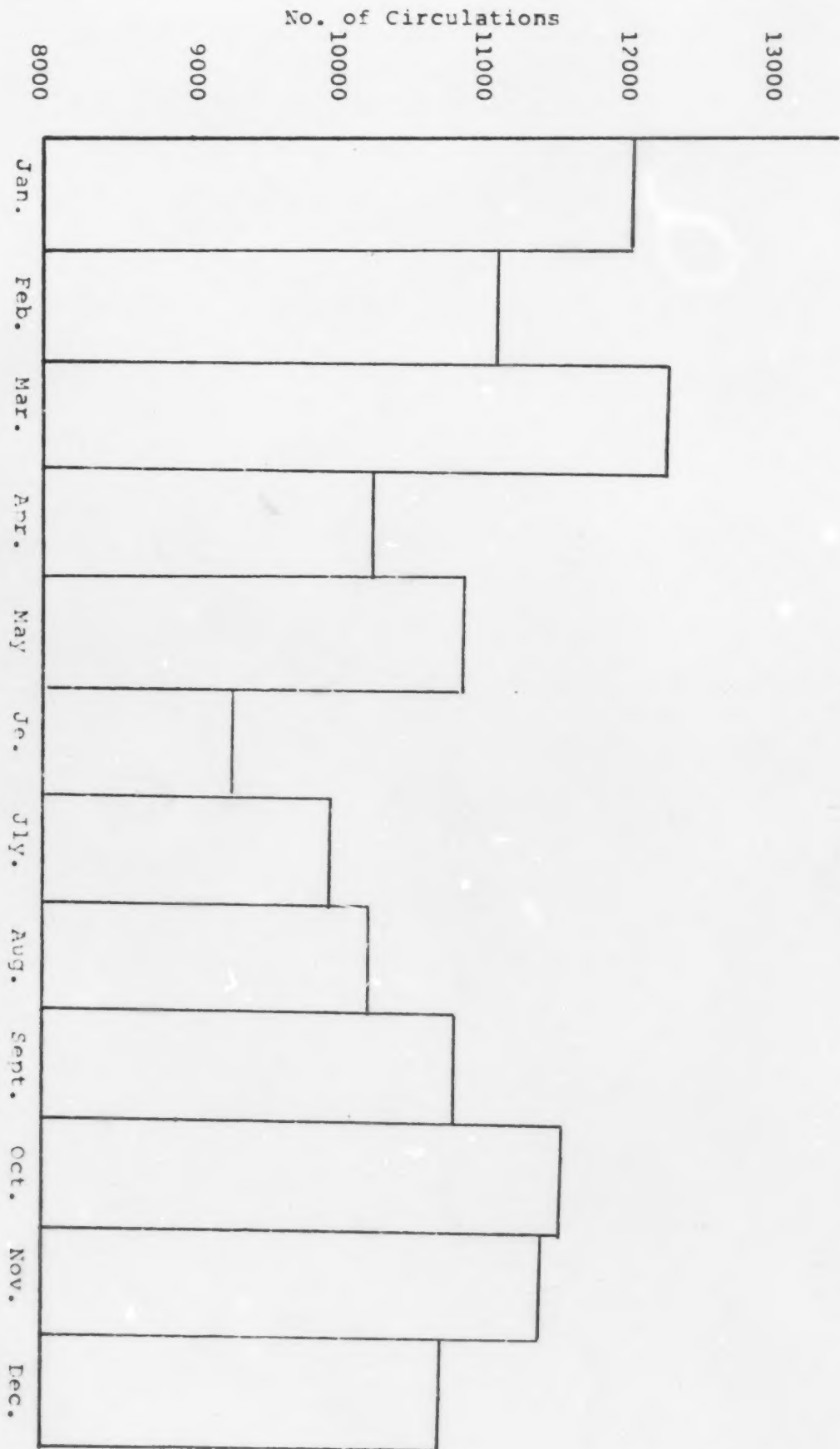


Figure 10
Adult Circulation by Month
Average 1973-1975



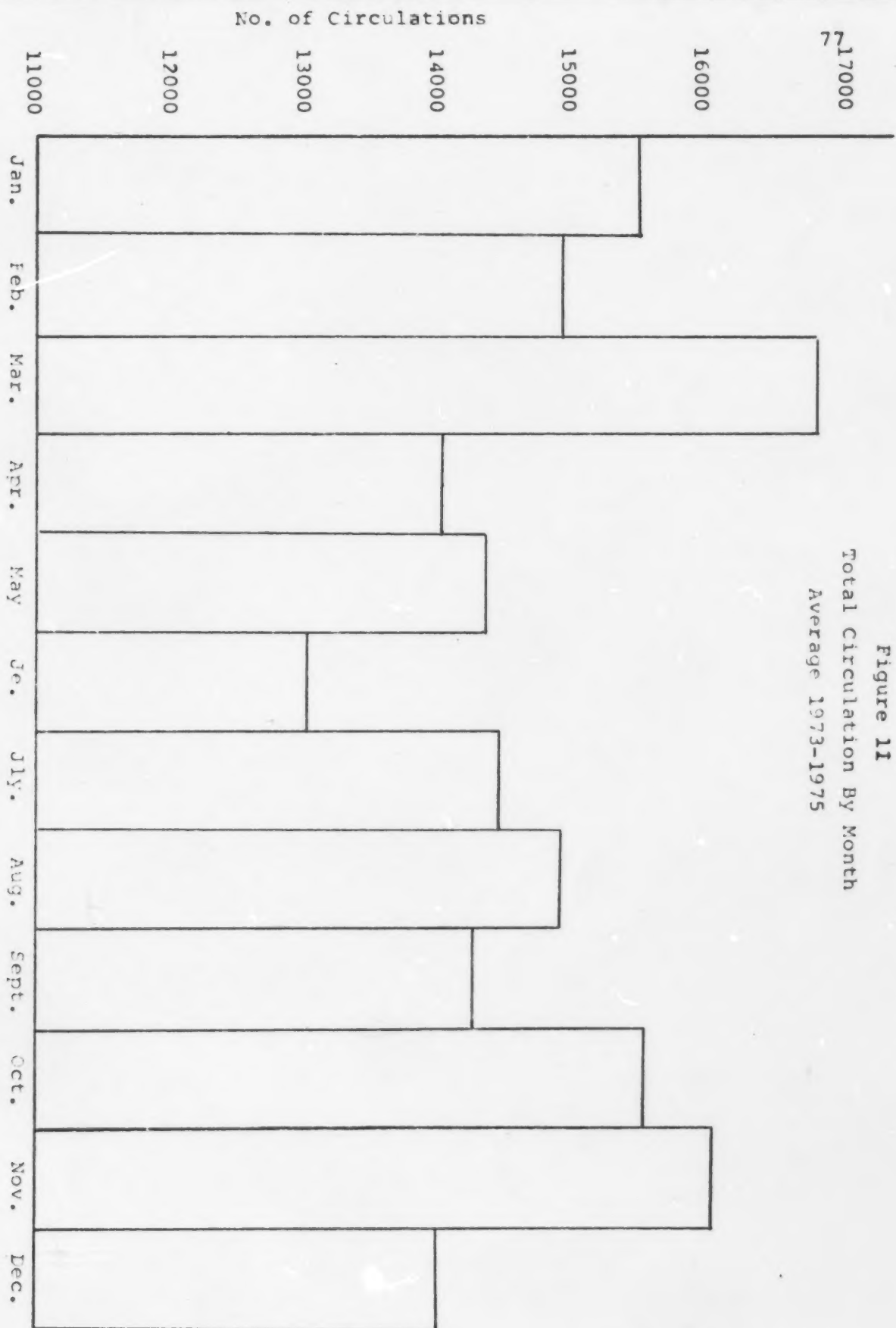


Figure 11
Total Circulation By Month
Average 1973-1975

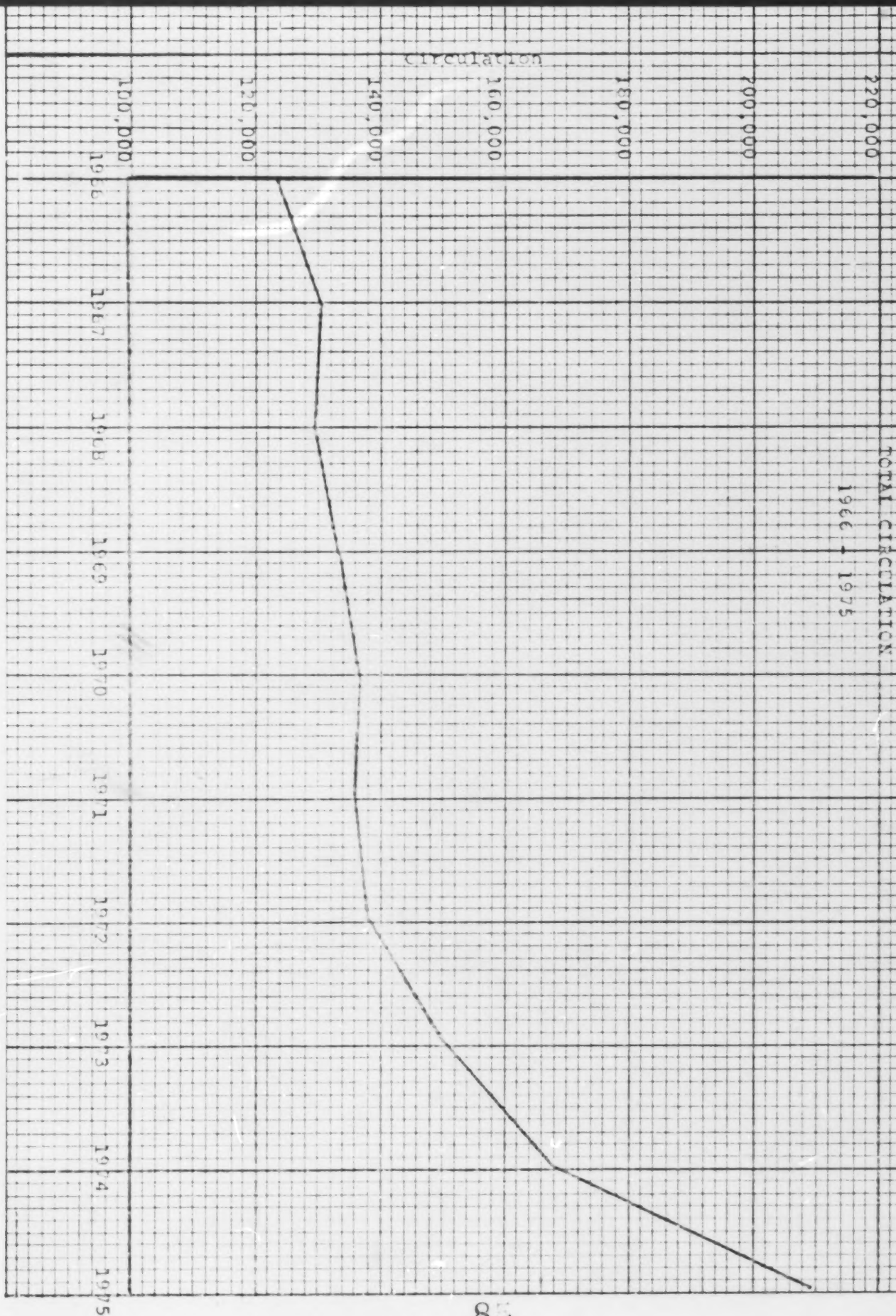


Figure 12

Factors involved in this rise included the increased materials expenditures discussed earlier; the recent economic adversities that have made public libraries greater focal points for individuals with more and different needs and fewer economic resources; a variety of activities, including better publicity of services available; and the vitalization of the library's Children's Room which under the guidance of an energetic and imaginative Head of Children's Services has become an excellent public service area which has shown the amazing increases cited above.

D. Information Services

The library has two Information desks situated conspicuously on each floor in the adult section. The activities at the first floor desk include answering any general information question (location of a book, directions, etc.); booking films through the regional library system; encouraging and accepting reserves on any item the library owns but is not in at the moment; taking requests for materials not presently owned by the library but which will be purchased or obtained through inter-library loan; aiding individuals in research; providing reader's advisory services; and providing telephone information service. The second floor information desk supervises that area and provides primarily directional guidance to individuals.

The Information staff consists of one professional and five pre-professional personnel who have been trained to handle a variety of responsibilities off the desk which consume approximately 50% of their time. They are scheduled for Information duty in two hour blocks. An Information person is on duty whenever the library is open.

The resources available are wide-ranging. The library has a good reference collection backed by substantial general and periodical holdings and an updated pamphlet file. For information not available at the library, other libraries, such as Fitchburg (local call) and Worcester (there is a regional telephone credit card to use so there is no charge to the library or individual user), may be contacted.

The amalgamation of these resources provides a network within which the vast majority of user informational needs can be met. In 1975, 19,682 informational requests were handled by the first floor Information staff.

E. Services to Groups

The library actively conducts services for many groups. Special services to adults include the use of the library's meeting room; aid in the planning and booking of film programs; establishment, maintenance, and rotation of deposit collection at nursing and rest homes and at the Senior Citizen Center; visits to shut-ins with library materials picked specifically for them; regular film programs primarily of feature length movies, including such titles as "The Hustler" and "Citizen Kane", and occasional special programs like Christmas Caroling. Special services to schools include class visits for tours and instructional sessions for research tools like "Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature".

Services to children include a great variety of activity. During the summer months the Children's Room puts on a series of programs that include such items as arts and crafts workshops, puppet-making workshops, song festivals, field trips to interesting places, and reading clubs. The library also has free movies, pre-school story hours, arts and crafts workshops, contests, and special events like a Halloween party and a Pilgrim party throughout the remainder of the year.

F. Miscellaneous Other Services

The library also engages in several other services that are relatively small in nature but large in their value to a number of library users. A community bulletin board is maintained and contains a variety of information, including bus schedules, group activities, and important community information. A listening station is available for public use with library's or an individual's record collection. A collection of talking books and their hardware are available, and connections for direct service from the regional talking book library can be made. A coin-operated photocopying machine is available whenever the library is open. The library also has "The Swap Shop", a display where individuals can leave no longer needed books, magazines, coupons, and clothing patterns and take those for which they do have some use. The library also periodically changes book displays to highlight aspects of the collections and generated lists of new materials or those on an interesting subject. An active public relations program is for the most part, adequate, and its expansion should not be a high priority in a period of under-staffing and over-utilization of library services.

G. Summary

While the Children's Room heavily engages in a variety of services, the adult section of the library provides primarily material, circulation, and information services. More should be done in this area with particular attention being paid to young adults, who, except for a small browsing area on the second floor, receive little in the way of direct services. The potential for programming is quite great for Leominster with its great number and variety of organizations, with a rather high percentage of veterans, and, especially, with a very significant foreign stock population. These areas are cited as examples of interests in the community that could be translated in some sort of library services, be they special displays, ethnic nights or festivals, etc.

For the most part the library is good but has to become more active in its programming and expanding services. The keys to doing these are to be found in the recommendations in Chapter II, which would greatly aid the library in expanding its horizons and becoming the needed city agency it must be.